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ABSTRACT

The papers presented in this document are the following: (1) "Historic Poles of Public Education" by Faustine C. Jones, (2) "The Social Costs and Benefits of Public Education" by Bernard C. Watson, (3) "School Inequality in the Emerging Welfare State: Does It Make Sense?" by John D. Owen, (4) "Investment and Disinvestment in Public Education" by Charles S. Benson, (5) "Financing Public Education: The Threat of Disinvestment" by Alvin H. Townsel and Edwin Hamilton, (6) "Public Education, Private Education and the Tuition Tax Credit" by Donald E. Frey, (7) "Quality and Equality: The Regulation of Public Schools" by Arthur E. Wise, (8) "Searching Out the Best in Urban Education" by Lloyd M. Cooke and Dorie Greenspan, and (9) "A New Era of Excellence in Urban Education: What Can Be Done to Realize It?" by Francis S. Chase. (MK)

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"RESTORING CONFIDENCE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION: AN AGENDA FOR THE 1980s"

Conference Research Papers

This document contains the major research papers presented in January 1979 at The National Urban Coalition's conference, titled "Restoring Confidence in Public Education: An Agenda for the 1980s."

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HISTORIC ROLES OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Faustine C. Jones

In this paper I will use a timeline approach to look at public education roles from two dimensions: (1) historic and current roles of public education in general, that is, in terms of issues, policies and programs related to the majority group, as well as public attitudes toward those roles; and (2) historic and current roles of public education for blacks, and public attitudes toward those roles. A survey of the historical and educational literature in both these dimensions reveals conflicting conceptions of education and crosscurrents in educational thought with respect to policymaking, programs, and public attitudes about education.

Let us begin with a definition of education, and a look at what it is generally expected to accomplish. Education is both process and product. As process it is devoted to mental and moral development via instruction; as product it is the knowledge and development resulting from the instructional process, which we usually think of as the formal process undergone via schooling, but which we know includes informal and nonformal processes, both in and out of school. Thus education bears the formal, institutionalized responsibility for instruction (pedagogy), and it bears an equally awesome responsibility for socialization (transmitting the culture from one generation to the next).

Public education refers to schools set up by governmental authority subject to regulation, control, and inspection by government at all levels. These schools are funded by government from public monies secured through taxation, and are designed to serve public purposes — the common good, the public interest. As a nation we have believed so strongly in the worth of public education (or at least in its utility) that we have forced communities to maintain schools, forced parents to send their children to school, and compelled children to attend school.

We commonly equate public education with public schooling, even though we know they are not precisely synonymous. Education is broader, deeper, and continues longer than schooling; for education develops relationships, stimulates applications, uncovers meanings, and unearths new knowledge which schooling does not necessarily provide.

Most Americans today receive all, or some significant part, of their schooling, especially at the elementary and secondary levels, in public schools. There are, of course, parochial and private schools which parents are free to select for their offspring in lieu of public schools. But most Americans, for reasons of economy, convenience, philosophy, and/or custom have in the past sent their offspring to public schools, and a majority still do so today.

Education does not exist in a vacuum. It is always a function of time, place, circumstances. Thus to examine education and public schools at any period one must always examine the society and its prevailing conditions at that time. Disagreements and divisiveness in education often stem from, and reflect, more basic economic, social, and political differences in society. Neither the education establishment nor the public is monolithic. Keeping all this in mind, let us turn from definitions to the timeline approach, and survey the historic roles of public education.¹

As one examines the literature for evidence on the role of education in American history, for the majority group, one finds differing views of educational historians a clear split between the work of traditional educational historians and that of new revisionists. The long-standing work of such authorities as R. Freeman Butts, Lawrence A. Cremin, Merle Curti, Henry Steele Commager, Richard Hofstadter, and others² has been challenged by emerging authorities such as Clarence J. Karier, Paul Violas, Joel Spring, Michael B. Katz, and Colin Greer, whose books

began to appear in the late 1960s.³

The former group of educational historians, Butts and others, generally portray American society as democratic and good, possessing weaknesses which are continually worked on by concerned groups and individuals, striving for perfection, and making progress (albeit uneven) toward that end. According to this approach, the role of the school is to contribute toward the gradual perfection of American society and the American people. These scholars see the battle for public schooling as long and hard-fought. But they believe that American schools have moved, slowly but steadily, toward more democracy and now aim to educate all the children of all the people at public expense to at least age sixteen or seventeen. They emphasize that the concept of universal education has won out over the notion that education should be restricted to an elite, that the concept of equal educational opportunity has prevailed over the notion of exclusion of minorities, and over that of "separate-but-equal." Tax support for schools has increased even though inequities still exist within and between states. The curriculum has been enlarged and made more flexible to meet the varied needs and interests of diverse constituencies who now need to learn and relearn all their lives. Teachers are more qualified than ever before; more specialized support-service professionals are employed, as are community people in "aiding" roles. Federal support for education, with minimal controls, is described and encouraged as legitimate to assist hard-pressed states and local communities striving to meet the continuing educational needs of the underserved constituencies, especially blacks and other minorities of color in urban areas, and the handicapped. In general they write the "history of education as a form of social action."⁴

They defend the social system, while acknowledging its more obvious shortcomings, including those in education.

The revisionist historians, Karier and others, also write the "history of education as a form of social action."⁵ But they attack society for the illusions it has created, its false piety, the myth of merit, and the extent to which it has failed to live up to its expressed ideals. They find American society to be racist, class-oriented, conservative, materialistic, bureaucratic, and they maintain that the role of the school has been to protect vested interests. Education has been a systematic form of social control, repressive and oppressive. For example, David Tyack writes: "The public schools have rarely taught the children of the poor effectively--and this failure has been systematic, not idiosyncratic."⁶ These authorities effectively call our attention to the discriminatory treatment of minority groups and women, the mistreatment of ethnic groups and immigrants, the direct connections between education and social stratification as well as those between schools and politics. They have "demythologized the history of American education, stripped away false assumptions, and pointed out the inadequacies of the historical record."⁷

Which interpretation is more accurate? There is no scientific way to know, but if we focus society's intent for education as we sift through the evidence provided by authorities, we find ourselves, to some extent, in a proverbial "chicken and egg" controversy. We cannot in truth say either interpretation misrepresents facts; instead we must acknowledge different interpretations of the facts. What was society's intent for itself? What was its intent for education and schools? What did the schools themselves intend to do -- what roles did they perceive to be theirs legitimately? The opposite questions also apply

here—what was it that society did not intend to do? What did society intend that schools not do? What did the schools themselves not to do? And in a different vein—what were the unintended consequences of public schooling?

These hard questions are a part of the ongoing dialogue and debate among authorities and citizens. It will be more productive here for us to focus on effect. Let's assume that American society intended to preserve and sustain itself as it grew and developed, changed from rural to urban, changed from agricultural to industrial to post-industrial, excluded and admitted large groups of people from other countries, moved from isolationism to participation in world affairs. Let's assume also that America would accept, willingly or unwillingly, change within society, but would resist change of society. Within this framework, then, what was the effect of having public schools and schooling for most individuals as compared with not having such schools and schooling? I believe we will find that the effects of public schooling have exceeded intent in this developing nation.

In the colonial period, especially in New England, we find the roots of today's public schooling concepts. It was Massachusetts which passed laws in 1642 and 1647 to require towns to establish schools, to require children to attend a school, and to maintain them at least in part by general taxation.⁸ In 1650 the general court of Connecticut followed Massachusetts' lead by requiring that all boys be taught to read the scriptures. These laws established a precedent for the free school of nineteenth century.⁹ In this early period, the school was perceived to be an instrument for the preservation of religious faith, as well as for economic good. The clergy were the influential people of that period, and as part of the "public" they supported these laws.

It was, of course, in their self-interest to do so since they wanted to expand religiosity and socialize people into being temperate and obedient. Master craftsmen, of businesses, and other influential public persons, supported these schooling laws for economic reasons. Anyone who could read and write was not likely to become a public charge, a pauper, and might well become a better worker.

Now we may argue, as would the revisionists, that the primary purpose of providing schooling was the welfare of the colonies, the clergy, and the craftsmen -- not the well-being of the children who were to be schooled. There is much truth in the argument since community influentials of the time wanted primarily to develop religious, civic, and economic responsibility -- not to produce refined, polite, educated children. But the effect of providing educational laws and schools went far beyond the limited intent of the providers; education was a two-edged sword. Children learned useful trades, which they could use immediately and/or which they could carry with them as they grew up and moved elsewhere, taking advantage of opportunities provided by the expanding frontier. Most poor settlers were able to better themselves in one generation, an achievement which would have been impossible in Europe. Another effect was that the idea of collective responsibility for the education of the young was implanted in American society. The public accepted the concept that states and local districts have a responsibility to educate the young; such responsibility is not totally that of individuals, their parents or guardians.

Moreover, by the beginning of the eighteenth century, new voices from the public could be heard, advocating expanded educational opportunity in terms of providing for individual talents and interests (the Quakers); education for politics, business, government, science (Benjamin Franklin); for maintaining social control -- education is the best police-

man (Daniel Webster); free elementary schools for all white children (male and female) for three years, with free education at advanced levels for the most talented boys from poor white families (Thomas Jefferson). Jefferson also recommended public support and control of education, anticipating the course of educational reform in the nineteenth century.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the young country had gained its independence from England, and had become for more secularized. The new federal system of government needed an "enlightened citizenry," the production of which was a role of the schools. Another role of the schools was to socialize children in patriotism and loyalty to the national state; to inculcate patriotism, nationalism, and republicanism. These concepts were reinforced in the 1840s and 1850s as the great immigrations occurred. This role endured, and was successfully executed by schools well into the twentieth century, probably until the 1960s.

Free, public, common elementary schools were demanded by the public early in the nineteenth century, and were a reality by mid-century for whites, except in the South. The common man, the worker, felt that his children could rise to the top if they had schooling. Tax-paying businessmen were urged to support universal elementary education in order to "raise the productivity of the people and thereby increase national prosperity."¹⁰ With increasing urbanization, industrialization, and immigration, society expected that universal elementary education would decrease crime, and prevent poverty. Philosophers argued that education was the natural right of individuals, and that there was a public duty to supply education for all children. Thus, by the middle of the nineteenth century,

the role of the schools had become more critical to society than in the earlier era. The schools now had the responsibility for taking on societal tasks which could not be left to haphazard fulfillment by family, church, or the community.

But not all portions of the public accepted the idea of universal elementary education. In rural areas generally, and in the South particularly, there was resistance, usually based on a perception that this kind of education was not needed by the young in those areas. Other citizens argued that all education demanded leisure, and therefore was a legitimate goal only for the upper classes. Much of this opposition was to universal public education, not to universal education per se. These opponents felt that everyone in a republic ought to be educated, but felt that only paupers should be schooled at public expense. Some felt that public-supported education transgressed on the rights of owners of private property; others felt that education was a religious function, not a public one. The Germans in Pennsylvania and Ohio feared that their children would lose both their culture and their language in public schools.¹¹

Tyack sums up this early period in this way:

During the colonial period, most schools had perpetuated differences of religion, occupation, national origin, and social class.

During the early national period, despite the desire of the revolutionary educational reformers for a homogeneous citizenry, education continued to be heterogeneous, maintaining much of its sectarian energy and social diversity....

Still the institutions were a hodgepodge... Beginning in the 1820s a number of Americans began to wonder if American schools were good enough or systematic enough to carry the burden placed on them. Out of decades of criticism and reform -- the ferment called the common school crusade -- emerged a basic democratic institution. From the clash of new social conditions and old articles of faith, interpreted by eloquent and determined reformers, came the American common school....

Meanwhile, advocacy for free public secondary education had begun about 1820 in cities in New England, in the Midwest, and in the South. Secondary education began as private enterprise, starting with Latin grammar schools. These existed beginning in 1635, primarily as college preparatory institutions for elite white males, and for a few talented poor boys. During the first half of the eighteenth century, private "English" secondary schools emerged in response to the growing commercial interests of the middle classes, to give practical vocational education in subjects needed for occupational success. Some of these subjects were shipbuilding, mathematics, surveying, bookkeeping, accounting, letter writing, foreign languages, geography, English grammar. In the latter half of the eighteenth century these schools gradually gave way to academies, which sought to combine in one institution the classical values and content of the Latin grammar schools with the more vocational values and content of the "English" schools. Academies were private schools and some were boarding schools. They differed in organization, funding, control, and student body; some were also founded for girls. The academy dominated secondary education for most of the nineteenth century.¹³

In 1827 Massachusetts passed a law requiring towns with 500 or more families to maintain high schools. It was the only state to require towns to establish high schools for over half a century.¹⁴ Many of the arguments for free public high schools paralleled those for free common universal elementary schooling. Additional arguments for such schools were that they would raise educational standards in the community, remove older children from the common schools thus making space for younger ones, keep youngsters at home under parental influence rather than sending them away to boarding schools with their pernicious influences and temptations, and provide a reliable source of teachers for the lower common schools. But it was not until the 1880s that students enrolled in high schools began to outnumber those enrolled in academies.

Needless to say, there was much opposition to the idea of free secondary education, as well as to the idea of state-supported colleges or universities. Significant portions of the public felt that if high school and college education were extended to the lower classes, it would create malcontents. Others believed that such people would be unwilling to do manual or farm labor, so the productive capacity of large numbers of people would be hindered. Still others argued against too much leisure time for the poor, and charged the supporters of free public secondary schools with communism, socialism, and atheism. Opponents of the schools also contended that while everyone would be taxed to support high schools and colleges, only a few would benefit from their services. They maintained that much-needed funds would be diverted from elementary schools for these higher schools. But public support of high schools was legalized by the Kalamazoo decision of the Michigan Supreme Court in 1874, and by the Richards v. Raymond decision in Illinois in 1878.¹⁵

It is important to pause here and note that the legal basis for support of public high schools is only about 100 years old, and that it was not until the turn of the twentieth century that large numbers of high schools were established for white youth. Thus this nation has had a well developed high-school system for white youth only since about the end of World War I (1918); even less than 100 years. Public high schools were primarily urban-centered, and the resolution of conflicting values in the society was considered one of their legitimate functions.

Richard Pratte summed up the effects of the public school movement through the end of the nineteenth century:¹⁶

The revolutionary effects of the shift from an unsystematic pattern of schools to a full-scale bureaucratization of schools represents a major ideological commitment... The public school movement took on the form of formal compulsory instruction publicly sponsored, and adopted the prevailing corporate-bureaucratic structure dominant in the society at large, and came to be administered along production lines, guided by the cult of efficiency.

The belief prevailed that a reallocation of the country's investment leading to more schools and longer schooling would eventually yield a return on investment from greater increases in the gross national product Increased expenditures for public schooling would be followed by a general upgrading of the labor force, a marked increase in earning power, and by rising levels of economic growth.

There was General acceptance that

- Schooling is no longer a privilege, but a universal necessity, good for both the individual and the larger society.
- It is part of the role of the school to group, sort, and screen students according to ability and responsibility.
- Education is formal schooling, and schools are the major educative force in society. Thus they may operate as a public monopoly, modeled after the organizational structure and utilitarian values of corporate business.
- The teaching/learning environment of the school is not necessarily connected to the community at large. It may be, but not necessarily, for schooling given may not have caught up with segments of a rapidly changing industrial society, or conversely, it may be aimed at leading the community to effect broad changes.

A major role of the public school through the 1920s was to provide children and youth with the skills, techniques, and knowledge necessary for success in life (as success is customarily defined) in corporate, urban America. The role of the school became, more clearly than ever, that of a transitional preparatory institution in which the young were separated from the family and its socialization patterns and were prepared to join the increasingly complex economic and political order. Only a small proportion of high school graduates went on to college, or were expected to do so.

At this same period, from around the turn of the century through the 1920s, public schools were charged with the responsibility for educating "new immigrants" from southern and eastern Europe and their

offspring. Although all these immigrants were white, leading anthropologists and sociologists classified them as inferior to Nordic or Teuton types. Such respected educational authorities as Ellwood Cubberley described the coming of the immigrants as a corruption of the national life and he feared a dilution of our national stock as a result of their presence.¹⁷ Congress accepted testimony as to the inferiority and illiteracy of white Europeans, including Jewish persons, and was so influenced by what it heard that it passed two very restrictive immigration bills in 1921 and 1924. "National origins" were to remain a barrier to admission of southern and eastern Europeans and some other groups until December 1, 1965, when an act of Congress began to eliminate, over a five year period, nations of origin as a basis for selective entry.¹⁸

Public schools taught the children of these immigrants, but also created divisiveness between parents and their offspring. The children learned that the culture of their homes was not acceptable to native-born Americans. There was often much insecurity and some generational conflict.¹⁹ But second and third, and sometimes fourth generations of these immigrant families have by this time become well schooled and most have transcended their feelings of marginality which were in part induced by in-school experiences. Most of them have been able to enter the economic, social, and political mainstream of American life.

In the 1930s adherents of progressive education conceived the role of the school to be relating teaching to life in the society, helping students solve the daily problems which occur in a rapidly changing society, and simultaneously helping them understand the ongoing, persistent aspects of those situations which recur throughout life. The social function of schooling increasingly stressed John Dewey and his followers, and also advocated the problem-solving method as

that most appropriate to teaching as well as to learning. They believed the school should give the young a technique, a method, which would enable them to control their own destinies instead of being robots in the technological, corporate society. In the 1940s a "life-adjustment" philosophy pervaded many public high schools.

World War II intervened, and at its end there was much vociferous indictment of mass public schooling. Arthur Bestor, Admiral Rickover, and others attacked public schools for "soft pedagogy" and misplaced emphases. The schools were blamed for ignoring the demands of an expanding industrial economy, for neglecting science and mathematics instruction, and for failing in their duty to inculcate patriotism and a strong loyalty to flag and country. It was alleged that rigorous instructional standards had fallen by the wayside, and that the affective dimension had been favored over the cognitive. Criticism of public schools continued through the 1960s.

In the 1960s and 70s the public schools have come increasingly under attack from diverse elements of the public -- parents who are concerned that their offspring cannot read and write acceptably; employers who complain that employees lack both literacy and a sense of responsibility; colleges which must provide remedial instruction at the secondary school level before some students can reasonably be expected to succeed in higher education; taxpayers who feel sure they are not getting their money's worth as property taxes for school funding soar, but measures of achievement decline.

Educational Policy toward Blacks and Other Minorities

For Blacks and other minorities, educational ideals have not been applied throughout American history as with the dominant group.

While "compulsory attendance" was becoming the accepted educational policy for white children in schools, "compulsory ignorance" was being entrenched as the educational policy for black children. In fact, blacks in the South were excluded from the public schools until the end of the Civil War. In the North, most states had separate schools for blacks and whites including public schools, even though they were not required by law to do so.

"Ignorance was a primary instrument of enslavement," Meyer Weinberg writes.²⁰ It was in 1740 that South Carolina passed the first law forbidding anyone to teach blacks, to have them taught, or to use their services in writing. Of course a few slaves learned to write and read through clandestine means, and/or the benevolence of their owners -- Frederick Douglas is one example of such a person -- but the overwhelming majority were forcibly kept unlettered.

The ratio of slaves to free blacks in the South was about 9:1. Therefore even if every free black had been educated the impact on the black population would have been minor. In 1850, 43 percent of the free black adults in North Carolina were literate, but only 20 percent of those in Virginia were literate. You can be sure that in the deep South literacy rates were much lower. Those free blacks who received some education in the South gained it from (1) private schools, usually secret, (2) Sabbath schools, (3) apprenticeship, (4) public schools, and (5) special treaty requirements.²¹ Laws and public administrative actions regulated their education. For the most part blacks were excluded from whatever public schools existed, even though they often paid school taxes. Free blacks in Virginia, facing repressive laws

against the education of their children, sent them out of state to school, especially to Michigan. Virginia's legislature retaliated by passing a law preventing the return to Virginia of those "who had left the state for schooling."²² Carter G. Woodson pointed out that by 1860 only 10 percent of adult Negroes in the South had the rudiments of education, a proportion much lower than it had been in 1825.²³

Turning to free blacks in the North prior to the Civil War, we find that systematic, widespread schooling was not made available to them. In the beginning free public schools had a stigma attached to them because they were regarded as a system for educating paupers, so blacks were advised to stay away from public schools lest they be regarded as becoming public charges. As this stigma of charity was removed from public schools, however, blacks persistently struggled to be included and to have their children educated at public expense. Woodson details these struggles state by state in Education of the Negro Prior to 1861.²⁴ In Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois blacks pressed public officials to admit their children to public schools.

Blacks also used their own hard-earned, meager salaries to establish private schools for their children.²⁵ These schools sometimes were aided by white abolitionists. They were marvelous examples of self-help by highly motivated blacks, but the schools usually offered minimal programs because their resources were so limited. White mobs sometimes burned these schools, but blacks usually built another school or continued instruction of their children in church buildings.

Spokesmen for and reformers of public education for whites did not exhibit equal concern for the education of blacks. The noted Horace Mann, for example, was opposed to slavery but felt that, as an educator, he could not speak out against it.²⁶ In 1851 he wrote "approvingly" that the universal opinion was that blacks were inferior to whites in intellect, but superior in sentiment and affection. Mann advocated the voluntary repatriation of free blacks to Africa, feeling that Africa as their home where God had adapted the climate for their organization. Few whites challenged Mann's statements. One who did was Wendell Phillips in the pages of the Liberator.²⁷

The infamous Dred Scott decision of 1857 epitomized public opinion and public policy of that time -- "Blacks had no rights which whites were bound to respect." By the time of the Civil War, 1861-1864, generations of blacks had been denied schooling by the dominant society, North and South. But they continued to strive for the right to learn and to be taught in formal, organized, systematized settings. The irony of this whole period is that if blacks had been incapable of learning, as was the general claim, there would have been no need to deny them schooling. Thus as Weinberg points out, the desperate attempts of whites to deny blacks schooling meant that whites did not fear that blacks could not learn, but that they would.²⁸

After the Civil War the school problem in the South was one of staggering proportions: of 4,100,000 former slaves some 1,700,000 were of school age.²⁹ There was no system of public schools in existence for them, or for poor whites. The white planter class had successfully kept all people below their class in varying degrees of ignorance. To tackle problems faced by the newly freed slaves the

Freedmen's Bureau was created on March 3, 1865. During its existence (March 3, 1865 to June 30, 1872), it did an outstanding job, especially in education. When the Bureau was abolished it was operating "2677 day and night schools with 3300 teachers (most of whom it had trained) and 149,581 pupils."³⁰ It had established a system of professional teacher-training, and industrial training schools for blacks, and established such institutions as Howard and Fisk Universities, Hampton Institute, and St. Augustine Normal School. In this same period, philanthropic groups and individuals in the North gave financial support to the education of blacks.

But it was clear that the educational future of blacks depended on the creation of public schools. Under congressional reconstruction and the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments blacks secured fundamental citizenship rights. By 1870 every southern state had created a public school system, and by 1880 one-third of all black children in the U.S. were in public schools.³¹ In general, however, in the South and the border states there was much inequality in public revenues spent on the schooling of blacks as compared with the amount spent on whites. The irony of the situation is that, as DuBois documents in The Negro Common School (1901), blacks were being denied their proportionate share of school funds (in terms of what they were paying into the system), but the common misperception was that blacks were educated at the expense of whites. Nevertheless, inequities notwithstanding, by the last quarter of the nineteenth century the southern states had established a system of free public schools for all children, black and white.³²

By the 1890s, relationships between blacks and whites were shifting and rapidly deteriorating due to economic changes and political/legal compromises. A new system of discrimination began to emerge in the South with the institution of Black Codes, grandfather clauses, the sharecropper system, literacy tests, etc. Inequalities of all kinds -- funding, length of school term, facilities, supplies and materials, teachers' salaries -- were codified into formal accepted educational policy under the Plessy v. Ferguson decision of 1896. Inequality, segregation, discrimination became the watchwords of southern public policy (most blacks still lived in the South), from 1895-1954.

Henry Allen Bullock described the situation:

Under the impact of new constitutional interpretations and limiting statutory laws, racial segregation became institutionalized and provided a special mold according to which education for Negroes was to be shaped for almost one hundred years. The biracial society in the South limited the education of Negroes to a special kind considered suitable for their status; it anchored the support of Negro schools more in the willingness of white citizens to provide for them than in the ability of states to support them; and, most important of all, it directed the development of Negro children out of the mainstream of American culture into the bayous. If there is any period that can be said to mark the beginning of what is commonly called Negro education, this is it.³³

Booker T. Washington became the dominant spokesman for Negro education; his educational philosophy and practice stressed vocational/industrial education as most appropriate for the black condition at that time. He appealed to whites to use black workers as the South's basic labor supply. Washington recognized the need for a black

TABLE 1 ^{34/}

Average length of term (school days) for white and Negro public schools in the southern states, 1909-10 and 1928-29

States	1909-10		1928-29	
	White	Negro	White	Negro
Alabama	131	90	159	129
Arkansas	94	70	152	132
Florida	123	106	163	128
Georgia	158	126	158	137
Kentucky	123	115	160	140
Louisiana	156	93	174	112
Mississippi	123	101	141	130
North Carolina	105	94	151	137
South Carolina	125	74	173	114
Tennessee	121	89	166	156
Texas	139	135	152	147
Virginia	133	123	174	151
Average	128	101	164	144

Sources: W. E. B. Du Bois, Common Schools and the Negro American (Atlanta, Ga.: Atlanta University Press, 1911); and E. B. Reuter, The American Race Problem (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1938), P. 288.

professional class, but he felt that they would be dependent on the larger majority of blacks within the segregated community.

The "battle" between Washington and W.E.B. DuBois, who preferred a more classical, liberal education for blacks, is well know. DuBois was active in liberal arts universities, and it was at Atlanta University in 1896 that he began the first effort to study scientifically the problems of the Negro in the United States, not the "Negro problem" as it had been commonly defined.

The preceding and following tables show inequalities in some southern states in length of school term, per capita annual expenditures, and average monthly salaries of white and black teachers during the period 1909-1929. In purely economic terms, the South could not afford two separate school systems. It was the poorest region of the country, lacked an industrial base, was faced with declining importance of its chief cash crop (cotton), had a thinly spread population, and a high ratio of children to adults. Blacks suffered thrice--because they were black and powerless, and because their region was poor.

TABLE 2 ^{35/}

Per capita annual expenditure (dollars) for the education of white and Negro children in the southern states, 1914-15 and 1929-30

States	1914-15		1929-30	
	White	Negro	White	Negro
Alabama	9.00	1.47	37.50	7.16
Arkansas	8.15	3.74	26.91	17.06
Florida	15.10	2.37	78.25	10.57
Georgia	10.01	2.08	31.5	6.98
Kentucky	10.30	8.91	25.27	25.77
Louisiana	16.44	1.81	40.64	7.84
Mississippi	8.20	1.53	31.33	5.94
North Carolina	7.38	2.66	44.48	14.30
Oklahoma	14.33	11.16	40.48	20.83
South Carolina	10.70	1.09	52.89	5.20
Tennessee	8.70	4.58	46.52	31.54
Texas	10.89	7.50	46.71	39.66
Virginia	11.47	3.20	47.46	13.30
Average	10.82	4.01	42.39	15.85

Sources: Monroe N. Work, *The Negro Year Book*, 1916-17 (Tuskegee Institute, Ala.: The Negro Year Book Publishing Company, 1917), and *The Negro Year Book*, 1931-32 (Tuskegee Institute, Ala.: The Negro Year Book Publishing Company, 1932.)

TABLE 3 ^{36/}

Average monthly salary (dollars) of white and Negro public school teachers in some southern states, 1909-10 and 1928-29

States	1909-10		1928-29	
	White	Negro	White	Negro
Alabama	53.76	24.47	117.18	54.46
Arkansas	40.52	30.36	96.40	69.08
Florida	61.97	31.98	130.12	66.25
Georgia	83.37	36.29	97.22	38.24
Louisiana	63.05	31.46	133.22	88.57
Mississippi	69.92	30.21	129.71	53.85
North Carolina	37.02	25.26	116.00	70.59
South Carolina	79.77	35.62	126.14	40.51
Tennessee	48.12	26.96	112.50	71.92
Texas	62.07	46.34	121.03	91.60
Virginia	47.18	29.37	111.36	69.72
Average	60.60	32.67	118.01	72.78

Sources: W. E. B. Du Bois, The Common School and the Negro American (Atlanta, Georgia, Atlanta University Press, 1911) pp. 107-115; Monroe N. Work, The Negro Year Book, 1916-17 (Tuskegee Institute, Ala.: The Negro Year Book Publishing Company, 1917), and The Negro Year Book, 1931-32 (Tuskegee Institute, Ala.: The Negro Year Book Publishing Company, 1932).

David Tyack reports that "in 1931 in the South as a whole the average figure spent on white students in the public schools was \$45.63 in comparison with \$14.95 for the Negro."³⁷ There was no equality under the "separate but equal" mandate of the Supreme Court, and no enforcement attempted.

With such glaring inequalities readily apparent, it is ironic that John Dewey, the foremost educational philosopher of the period, who focused on democracy and education, did not address himself to the question of blacks, democracy, and education. In fact, when one examines the period from 1889-1942 in the larger American society it is clear that there was growing concern for children and youth, an expansion of the educational enterprise at all levels, but particularly at the secondary level, and the development of a science of education via the Herbartian movement, the Child-Study movement, experimental psychology, the measurement movement, the school survey movement, and pragmatic-progressive education theory. These efforts affected public education positively for whites, but not for blacks or other minorities of color. While black educators studied and accepted the principles espoused by John Dewey, and educational practices developed by William H. Kilpatrick, Boyd H. Bode, and others, neither those outstanding educational leaders nor public education policy operated positively for blacks and other minorities of color. It was the N.A.A.C.P.'s legal battles, and state/local efforts on the part of individual black teachers and principals in conjunction with parents and community organizations which began to attack the unequal, discriminatory education provisions operative for the black population.

The irony of the situation, though, was that many excellent black minds were channeled into teaching. The intent of segregation was to keep blacks in a social position of inferiority. But the effect of channeling many excellent people into the city schools for blacks was to develop a cadre of dedicated, intelligent people who maximized opportunity within the segregated system. Black adults used teaching as a primary means of employment in the South and in border states. Ironically also, these teachers and schools were not regulated and supervised on a daily basis as long as no disturbances were created, so teachers and principals were free to teach their students the truth about Negro history, to encourage them as people, to goad and cajole them, when necessary, to study and achieve. Further, the obvious lack of employment opportunity in the southern states for those who lacked education and/or skills motivated somewhat recalcitrant learners to exert themselves lest they fall by default into some undesirable work. By the 1920s a number of excellent all-black high schools had developed despite the system of segregation and inequality, and they continued to operate effectively until the mid-1950s. Notable among these schools were Dunbar High School in Washington, D.C.; Manassas High School in Memphis, Tenn.; Roosevelt in Gary, Indiana; DuSable of Chicago; Dunbar and Jones High Schools in Greater Little Rock, Arkansas; Douglas of Oklahoma City; Manual Training in Muscogee, Oklahoma; Lincoln and Sumner in the Greater Kansas City area; and Parker of Birmingham, Alabama.³⁸

Early in the 1940s black teachers and the principal at Dunbar High School, Little Rock, Arkansas, took court action to equalize the salaries of black and white teachers in that city; they won the case.

There were several such suits for equal salaries in Virginia in the late 1930s and early 1940s, beginning in Norfolk and spreading to other cities including Newport News, Danville, and Richmond. These cases exerted a progressive influence which went far beyond the specific communities in which they arose.³⁹

Numbers of blacks migrated to the North, hoping for greater educational opportunity for their children and greater employment opportunity for themselves. But black children in mixed northern schools were often separated in classrooms, and usually were segregated in, or excluded from, certain sports, such as swimming, and such social activities as the junior/senior prom. Black teachers and principals found only minimal employment opportunities in northern urban school systems. But blacks never gave up hope. As DuBois said, "Probably never in the world have so many oppressed people tried in every possible way to educate themselves."⁴⁰ They fought against segregation, discrimination, inequality, suppression, and intimidation to educate their children and themselves. They never gave up; and public education at all levels became the primary means of preparation for entry into occupations and adult citizenship responsibilities.

The 1954 Brown v. Topeka decision in education changed the basis for both public and educational policies for blacks. The concept of "separate-but-equal" was overturned. The long, hard struggle in the society and the courts (via the N.A.A.C.P.) leading up to Brown is beautifully told by Richard Kluger in his book, Simple Justice. But the struggle for equality — education, and social -- was just beginning. Weinberg cited DuBois' 1955 statement, in which he detailed the educational dilemma facing blacks:

The decision presents "Negroes with a cruel dilemma." On the one hand, "they want their children educated. That is a must, else they continue in semislavery."

On the other hand, "with successfully mixed schools they know what their children must suffer for years from southern white teachers, from white hoodlums who sit beside them and under school authorities from janitors to superintendents who hate and despise them. They know, dear God, how they know."

He (Du Bois) predicted that most of the best black teachers would lose their jobs "because they will not and cannot teach what many white folks will want taught."⁴¹

DuBois' words were prophetic. We have seen black students suspended, and pushed out of school.⁴² Black teachers and principals dismissed, demoted, and sidetracked into jobs with little meaning, and young, prospective teachers not finding employment. We have lived through the massive resistance schemes of southern politicians, and white flight from desegregating school systems. In fact, it was not until the passage and enforcement of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that much public school desegregation occurred, under the threat of withholding federal funds from segregating systems.⁴³

Black parents have continued sending their children to public schools, and working to improve the quality of those schools through any means possible. In many cities and counties we have elected school board members in an effort to change policy decisions; we have demonstrated, boycotted, picketed, sat-in, and sought community control of public schools in our neighborhoods. We have permitted our children to be bused, paired, and magnetized in an effort to gain equal educational opportunity for them. We have never given up on public schools or the

concept of schooling as a primary means of self-development, occupational opportunity, citizenship preparation, self-actualization, and upward mobility.

But northern-style de facto segregation continues, and has become a nation-wide phenomenon. It is enhanced now by the Dayton decision (1977) which has decreed that plaintiffs must prove segregative intent (not effect) in order to gain relief and justice for their offspring.

Influential figures in the education establishment continue to raise the age-old question: "Can blacks learn?" We have, for example, suffered through the 1966 Coleman report, its reassessments by Jencks, Moynihan, Mosteller, and others, and Coleman's more recent revisionist statements, recanting his original beliefs. The tradition of Thomas Jefferson, Horace Mann and others thus continues to the present day,⁴⁴ questioning the mental capabilities of the black population, despite its achievements "in spite of the system."⁴⁵

Public Schools are Being Retested

Public schools are under attack from friends and enemies alike, so the idea of the public school is being tested again just as it was tested in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as advocates fought to establish and spread the concept against opposition from significant portions of the American 'public'. Many proposals for "alternative" schools are really proposals to circumvent public schools. Voucher proposals probably will undercut the financial base of organized, institutionalized, systematized public schooling, and must be resisted. "Career education" does not necessarily prepare one for a meaningful occupation which pays a living wage.

There is a growing body of neoconservative social science literature which says that schooling makes little or no difference in the lives of underprivileged individuals and/or minority groups, or that the rate of return from long years of schooling is increasingly low, and therefore not worth the price, or that the public schools have failed and therefore should be abolished.⁴⁶ This is essentially the cost-benefit business model applied to education. It suggests that sufficient "profits" have not been realized from school expenditures. It suggests also that because educators have failed to overcome the academic achievement problems of low-income minority children and youth, it would be well, as a matter of public policy, not to continue to allocate society's resources to blacks or the poor.

But we must remember that the educational programs now under attack, such as Headstart, Follow-Through, Upward Bound, etc., got their start in 1965, only fourteen years ago. They were never adequately supported since it turned out that we could not have "guns and butter" in equal amounts during the Vietnam War period. These programs and other public policy efforts to assist blacks came under attack as early as 1972, only seven years after they were begun. Thus leading neoconservative intellectuals gave blacks, other minorities, and the poor only seven uneven years of governmental assistance to make up for generations of the most acute deprivation. In the 1960s and 70s permissiveness has pervaded both society and schools. "Do your own thing" has become the watchword of the day, along with the prescription "Look out for number one." Many of us believe societal permissiveness is illusory, shrouding the increasing regulation and conservatism evident in

institutional behaviors and public policies. This illusory permissiveness has not served black youth well, as many of them feel free not to learn, if learning is "not their thing." Too many teachers feel free not to teach, and too many parents feel free not to be responsible for their issue.

Further, public schools have been required to add to their own primary functions those essential tasks the family no longer does well and society's charges no other institution will accept. Thus public schools today are asked to go far beyond their original intent -- to assume such roles as feeding children breakfast, finding them clothing and eyeglasses, and assuming the major responsibility for desegregation in a generally segregated society.

Given the history of blacks in America, and their on-going struggle to be educated against continued formidable odds, the wonder is that we have survived at all, and that any of us have succeeded against the odds. But we have, and we retain our belief in learning. We did not succumb to the policies of compulsory ignorance which really ended only in 1964 with the passage and enforcement of the Civil Rights Act. Today we must find new ways so that our youth do not succumb to the more subtle plans for "voluntary" ignorance -- plans which include permissiveness, availability of drugs, suspensions, pushouts, fads in educational innovations, and general put-down of the worth of schooling.

To close, let us sum up what has been the effect of having public schooling that allowed masses of children to have some opportunity to learn and grow at public expense.

- There is an enlightened electorate capable of voting and maintaining republican democracy.

- Patriotism and loyalty to the nation still are inculcated via schooling, although probably not so intensely as in earlier centuries.
- Immigrants and their children from foreign countries have been, and continue to be schooled in public institutions in language, norms and values, and cognitive information, so that they may be successful, mobile, and happy in this nation.
- The needs of employers for competent workers have been met via public schooling.
- Our labor force has become the most schooled labor force in the modern world.
- Literacy is almost universal.
- Educational attainment rates continue to climb.
- Many youth from underprivileged families have been able to move into successful and satisfying economic and social positions.
- People have learned how to question the system, what to question about the system, and methods of changing the system to cause it to operate in less oppressive ways.
- Public schools provide a major employment market, and another market for goods and services -- books, supplies, furniture, equipment, repairmen, etc.
- Public schools have educated people to rise to positions where they are earners capable of purchasing goods and services to keep a productive, capitalistic economy operative.
- Public schools have made self-actualization possible for large numbers of individuals throughout our history.

We may conclude that even if religious, business, economic, social class, political, and racial intents or goals often have been primary in the minds of American influentials and policy-makers, and education secondary, the effect of education via public schooling has been to make a very meaningful, identifiable, verifiable difference in the lives of a great many Americans.

If we accept Daniel Bell's idea that since 1945 a post-industrial society has emerged in western countries:

. . . the structural aspects of post-industrialism -- and the transformation of the occupational structure of the society -- derive from techno-scientific changes in the organization of the economy: the strategic centrality of information and knowledge, the new innovative roles of theoretical knowledge for research and development as well as policy, the growing importance of the science-based industries in the last half of the twentieth century (e.g., electronics, computers, optics, polymers), and the rise of "intellectual technology" as the main feature of these developments, as machine technology was to industrial society in the past.

The socioeconomic changes can be illustrated by a few brief indicators: (a) a shift from a goods-producing to a service economy in the distribution of employment, (b) a white-collar and professional-technical occupational force, (c) the rise of an "information" economy (d) the expansion of the nonprofit sector.⁴⁷

If we accept the idea that the United States is now enmeshed in a post-industrial society, with most traditional frontiers conquered, we know that our system

is organized around information and utilization of information in complex systems, and the use of that information as a way of guiding society. It is a society uniquely dependent on the codification of theoretical knowledge. In effect, this means

that those institutions primarily concerned with the codification of theoretical knowledge become primary to society, because theory is the way to practice.

Since a postindustrial society requires knowledge, skills, and theory, formal education can become strategic. . .⁴⁸

There will be no place for ignorance, or even innocence, in the world which is unfolding before our eyes. In order that all citizen may be able to participate effectively and live out their lives meaningfully in this post-industrial society, we must rededicate ourselves to teaching, and to learning to insure that every child gets an equal chance to be schooled equally from public resources.

ENDNOTES

1. The reader who wants more detail on specific aspects of this topic will find useful a special issue of the Harvard Educational Review 46, no. 3, (August 1976) entitled "Education and History". The articles by Sol Cohen, Richard J. Storr, David B. Tyack, and Carl F. Kaestle are particularly relevant.

2. Representative of these studies is R. Freeman Butts and Lawrence A. Cremin, A History of Education in American Culture (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1953). Chapters 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, and 16 present educational viewpoints and actual practices in education in four periods -- 1600-1779, 1779-1865, 1865-1918, and 1918-1950. See also Merle Curti, The Social Ideas of American Educators, new, rev. ed. (Paterson, N.J.: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1959); and Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School (New York: Knopf, 1961).

3. Representative of revisionist thought are Clarence J. Karier, Paul Violas, Joel Spring, Roots of Crisis: American Education in the Twentieth Century (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1973); Shaping the American Educational State: 1900 to the Present ed. Clarence J. Karier (New York: Free Press, 1975); Michael B. Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: The Illusion of Change in America (New York: Praeger, 1971); Colin Greer, The Great School Legend: A Revisionist Interpretation of American Public Education (New York: Viking Press, 1972).

4. Sol Cohen, "The History of the History of American Education, 1900-1976: The Uses of the Past," Harvard Educational Review, 46, no. 3, (August 1976): 298-330.

5. Ibid.

6. David B. Tyack, The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1974), p. 12.

7. Sol Cohen, p. 329.

8. A History of Education in American Culture, p. 102. See all of chapters 3 and 4 for detailed information.

9. The Social Ideas of American Educators, p. 21. See also Richard Pratte, The Public School Movement: A Critical Study (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1973), chapter 2.

10. Butts and Cremin, pp. 193-94.

11. Ibid., pp. 190-96.

12. Turning Points in American Educational History, ed. David B. Tyack (Waltham, Mass.: Blaisdell Pub. Co., 1967), pp. 120-21; 124.

13. Butts and Cremin, pp. 121-27; 196-202; Tyack, pp. 352-54.

14. Tyack, p. 354.
15. Butts and Cremin, pp. 418-19.
16. Richard Pratte, The Public School Movement: A Critical Study (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1973), pp. 55-57.
17. Elwood Cubberly was a distinguished professor of education at Stanford University and a prolific writer in his field in the early twentieth century. Typical of his work is History of Education; Educational Practice and Progress Considered As a Phase of the Development and Spread of Western Civilization (New York City: Houghton Mifflin, 1920).
18. See Tyack, pp. 228-34. Also useful is Charles F. Marden and Gladys Meyer, Minorities in American Society, fifth ed. (New York: Van Nostrand, 1978), chapter 4. There are a number of detailed accounts, for example, Shaping the American Educational State: 1900 to the Present ed. Clarence J. Karier (New York: The Free Press, 1975), chapters 6, 8, and 9.
19. Oscar Handlin, The Uprooted (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1951), chapter 8.
20. Meyer Weinberg, A Chance to Learn: A History of Race and Education in the United States (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 11.
21. Ibid., p. 15.
22. Ibid., p. 18.
23. Carter G. Woodson, The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861 (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1968), p. 228.
24. Ibid., chapter 13, pp. 307-35.
25. Ibid., chapter VI, "Educating the Urban Negro", pp. 122-150.
26. Merle Curti, pp. 130-31; 138.
27. Meyer Weinberg, p. 31. Weinberg's sources as documented in his footnotes are issues of the Liberator, May 14, 1852; October 22, 1852; March 25, April 8, April 15, April 29, May 6, May 13, and May 20, 1853; December 24, 1847; February 11, 1848.
28. Ibid., p. 39.
29. Carey McWilliams, Brothers Under the Skin, rev. ed. (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1964), p. 257. See also Henry Allen Bullock, A History of Negro Education in the South: From 1619 to the Present (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1967), pp. 22-29.
30. Ibid.

31. Meyer Weinberg, p. 46.
32. Henry Allen Bullock, p. 58.
33. Ibid., p. 74.
34. Ibid., p. 177.
35. Ibid., p. 180.
36. Ibid., p. 181.
37. David B. Tyack, op. cit., p. 269.
38. Black Students in White Schools, ed. Edgar A. Epps (Worthington, Ohio: Charles A. Jones Pub. Co., 1972), p. 4.
39. Faustine C. Jones, "Black Americans and the City: A Historical Survey," The Journal of Negro Education, XLII, no. 3., (Summer 1973), p. 277. For a full account of suits by black teachers see Doxey A. Wilkerson, "The Negro School Movement in Virginia: From 'Equalization' to 'Integration,'" in The Making of Black America, ed. August Meier and Elliott Rudwick. 2 vol. in 1 (New York: Atheneum, 1969), pp. 261-63.
40. W. E. B. DuBois, "The United States and the Negro," Freedomways (1971), p. 16.
41. Meyer Weinberg, p. 87. Weinberg's source is: W. E. B. DuBois, "Two Hundred Years of Segregated Schools," in W. E. B. DuBois Speaks: Speeches and Addresses, 1920-1963, ed. Philip S. Foner (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), p. 283.
42. Nancy L. Arnez, "Implementation of Desegregation as a Discriminatory Process," The Journal of Negro Education, XLVII, no. 1, Winter, 1978, pp. 28-45.
43. The entire Winter 1978 of The Journal of Negro Education is built around a candid discussion of desegregation; the reader is referred to this source for commentary on the subject. Also useful is the article by Charles S. Bullock III, "Federal Law and School Discrimination in the North," in the Journal of Negro Education, XLVII, no. 2, (Spring 1978), pp. 113-131.
44. Views of Thomas Jefferson on the education of Blacks may be found in Carter G. Woodson, p. 60-63; 66; 79-80; 91; 384-386.
45. This phrase is borrowed from Bernard C. Watson's book of that title. See his accounts of three public school administrators who made an educational difference in In Spite of the System (Cambridge, Mass., Ballinger Publications, 1974).

46. For a full statement of the author's views see her work, The Changing Mood in America: Eroding Commitment? (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1977). Chapters 2 and 5 are particularly appropriate to this point.

47. Daniel Bell, "The New Class: A Muddled Concept," in Society, Volume Sixteen, Number Two, January/February 1979, pp. 17-18. For a full treatment of his ideas on the post-industrial society see his book, The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973.)

48. Richard Pratte, p. 219.

THE SOCIAL COSTS AND BENEFITS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Bernard C. Watson

Introduction

Attempts to measure and enumerate explicit social costs and benefits of public education raise a fundamental question. Do such attempts imply uncertainty or ambivalence about whether there are, in fact, social benefits and social costs? Does anyone seriously doubt that social benefits accrue from investments in public education? Leaders in developing nations in Asia, Africa and South America would be incredulous at such questions. These nations know the social value of public education. Their leaders routinely establish public education as a priority and allocate significant percentages of their national budgets to education. These nations know that an educated and trained citizenry is the key to economic development, political stability and social advancement. They also know the social costs of failure to invest in education: An untrained or under-skilled work force, a rigid class structure, slow developing or foreign-dominated economic system, an unstable political and social climate.

The history of this country provides adequate testimony of our belief in the social benefits of education. During the colonial period, laws were passed providing for instruction in reading so that children could avoid "that old deluder Satan." The founding fathers believed that an educated, informed citizenry was essential to the maintenance and development of our democratic form of government. Provisions for educating the young in basic skills and civic responsibilities were written into every state constitution. Public schools were viewed as a primary agent of socialization for the millions of immigrants who came from diverse economic, political, and religious backgrounds. Knowing this history, can anyone doubt there are social benefits from public education? We know that the success of business and industry depends upon a skilled and educated work force. We have such a work force.

Even a perfunctory examination of the world of our society should demonstrate to each of us the social benefits derived from education. The United States is, today, the most technologically advanced nation on earth. In the world order, our technology provides far reaching benefits that are a critical part of the impetus for developing nations. There is no question that Americans have one of the highest standards of living, are the best fed, the best educated, and the best housed citizenry of any throughout the world. In addition, our citizens live longer and are healthier. Surely the brains, skills, creativity, and performance of those responsible for this state of affairs can be attributed in large measure to the quality of education afforded most Americans. Surely education has also contributed significantly to the maintenance of some unity in a nation of minorities. Does anyone seriously question that education has helped hold our nation together through such tumultuous periods as the Civil Rights Revolution, the Vietnam Nightmare, and the Watergate Crisis? Yet, questions of how one measures the social benefits and social costs of public education are important.

Conceptual Problems

Linkages between education and social benefits and social costs are seldom made explicit. The problem of identifying the social benefits of education is complicated by the fact that study in this area is not a standard field of inquiry as are studies of achievement, economics, testing and curriculum.

Another variable that adds to the difficulty is the fact that these benefits and costs are products of a network of forces which are beyond the direct control of educational systems. These forces are extremely complex and have no discrete boundaries. The fact that our government

has not definitively stated national social goals and that no clear comprehensible social indicators have been established has added to our difficulties.

The lack of social indicators has not escaped the attention of scholars and public officials. For example, in 1929, President Hoover appointed a research committee to investigate social trends. In 1933, this committee issued a report stressing the need to plan for the nation's well-being. Three decades later, the National Commission on Technology, Automation, and Economic Progress,¹ established by Public Law 88-444, was given the responsibility for assessing and identifying the impact of technological changes on human needs. In their report, Technology and the American Economy, the Commission noted that the U.S. did not have a continuous system for charting social changes and was, therefore, ill-prepared to plan for the future. The Commission recommended that the government explore the creation of a "system of social accounts" to indicate the social benefits and costs of investments, thus reflecting the true costs of a product or a service.

In 1966, President Lyndon Johnson directed Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, John Gardner, to develop a method for improving the nation's ability to chart social progress. Johnson said:

The nation has no comprehensive set of statistics reflecting social progress or retrogression.
There is no government procedure for periodic stocktaking of the social health of the nation.
The government makes no social report...²

His comments suggested certain guidelines on education:

Education is the principal route to a high status occupation. We must assess the extent to which education limits social mobility and also the extent to which it increases it so that we can...

evaluate the effect of additional education and equality of opportunity and fund educational policies that will further this objective.³

The legislative branch of our government has also shown interest in social trends. In February 1967, Senator Walter Mondale and ten of his Senate colleagues gave prominent support to the idea of social indicators by introducing Senate Bill S-843, the Full Opportunity and Social Accounting Act of 1967. The structure of this bill provided for an annual social report, a council of social advisors, and a congressional joint committee on the social report (eight senators, eight representatives).

The bill was designed to

Encourage such conditions as well as give every American the opportunity to live in decency and dignity, and to provide a clear and concise picture of whether such conditions are prompted and encouraged in such areas as health, education...⁴

Wilbur J. Cohen, who served as Secretary of HEW in the late sixties, was equally concerned. Addressing the American Statistics Association in 1968, Cohen asked statisticians for help in the development of social indicators. He requested two types of statistics: Social indicators to help policymakers identify and measure problems and; social accounts to help policymakers decide how best to use scarce resources.

By 1974, our nation had progressed to the point where the Office of Management and Budget's Statistical Policy Division issued "Social Indicators of 1973." This was the first time social statistics had been organized in a coherent and interrelated manner by the government. Still, much remains to be done before we can measure social benefits and social costs of various institutions and policies.

What Statistics Tell Us

Although it is difficult to establish a one-to-one relationship, we know that well-educated parents tend to produce well-educated children. Well-educated parents also tend to be in the higher paying and higher status jobs. The influence of socioeconomic status (SES) on years of schooling is noteworthy: Four years after high school graduation, those in the top fifth of ability measures are five times more likely to be in graduate and professional schools if their parents were in the top SES quartile. Although SES is not the only important element ability — ability, personality, teacher influence, educational program are others — they are all essential indices.

We also know there is a definite relationship between educational attainment and the incidence of certain categories of criminal behavior. Those who commit the largest percentage of certain criminal acts (twenty-five years of age and under) and the cohort experiencing the largest increase in crime (eighteen years of age and under) had similar unsuccessful educational experiences, most in our public schools.⁵ We know that there is a definite association between educational attainment and incarceration; the lower the educational attainment, the higher the incidence of incarceration.

But socioeconomic status looms in our attempts to disaggregate the influence of education. The National Assessment of Educational Progress reports that among all communities, students who performed best were from big city schools where a large percentage of the parents are professionals or white-collar employees. On the other hand, students who performed worst were also from big city schools with a large percentage of their parents unemployed or on welfare.

There is a high correlation between education, employment, and income. Norwell Northcutt classified adults, on the basis of those three factors who function with difficulty.⁶ He found that adults at the poverty level were unemployed or in low status jobs and had eight years or less of schooling. Those just above the poverty line, but with no disposable income, had menial jobs and nine to eleven years of schooling. Finally those adults with high income had status jobs and schooling above the high school level.

Education - Costs and Benefits - An Overview

Historian Ronald Steel was on target when he said:

America's worth to the world will be measured not by the solutions she seeks to impose on others, but by the degree to which she achieves her ideals at home.⁸

Speaking on an individual basis, Leo Tolstoy said, "the need of education lies in every man."⁹ In an even broader framework, Martin Luther King Jr. observed that the world had become a neighborhood, but not yet a brotherhood.

It should be clear today the ideal of brotherhood must be kept constantly before us, especially as we enter a new era of relationship with Africa, Asia and South America. Consequently, the number one issue, whether explicit or implicit, for all Americans has remained our need to strive to attain the high goals and aspirations of our founding fathers.

It is obvious that linkages between education, social benefits and social costs are implied more than manifest. The dilemma this creates is confronted directly by Wilbur Cohen. Noting the dichotomy between education, as the underpinning for other disciplines, and the low esteem in which it is held as a vehicle for excellence, Cohen argues forcefully:

...The very foundations of intellectual curiosity and achievement are based upon the skills and contributions of the elementary and secondary school teacher...No medical student can pursue the challenge of anatomy and surgery without having had the benefit of a biology and chemistry teacher in high school.¹⁰

Cohen's argument aside, we need not be restricted nor constrained by data, intricate analyses of income, socioeconomic status and occupation to justify the value of investment in education. There are obvious and widely recognized benefits which accrue from investment in education; there are social costs which are just as obvious. It is only when a choice between the two is necessary that the issue becomes especially difficult.

Social Costs

The legacy of the black experience in America is one of enormous social costs: Lynchings, bombings, riots, hostile confrontations and a significant residue of hate, distrust and polarization. History records the experiences of slaves: Blacks were forbidden by law to learn to read or write; those who violated elements of the slave codes were severely punished; following Emancipation, the dual system of legal segregation and separate facilities severely restricted not only the quality but the type of education available to blacks. Gunnar Myrdal described the abysmal conditions in Negro schools in the South during the 1930s:

...Negro education still does not have a fixed, legitimately acknowledged place. It is realized that something must be done in order to keep the Negro satisfied and in order to uphold the American slogan of free schools for every child, but it is rare that a community has any real interest in

planning or building a wise system of education for the race. Politically, it is not admitted that a Negro has a right to schools.¹¹

Schools in the North and East, although somewhat better, still left much to be desired in their curriculum and quality. Lack of adequate schooling combined with the rigid and demoralizing patterns of discrimination in employment, housing, and social interaction guaranteed that most blacks would be mired in the lowest socioeconomic strata, would occupy the worst housing, receive the poorest medical care, work at the lowest paying jobs and have the least influence on the political life of their communities or their country. Maintained over generations, this system insured that the cycle of poverty, low life expectancy, inadequate nutrition, smoldering resentment and repressed rage would continue and be repeated.

When the great migration of southern blacks began, the social costs to society became increasingly obvious. Prior to this massive migration approximately 75 percent of black Americans lived in the South and most Americans could look upon the problem as a southern one. But after more than six million blacks poured into northern, western, and eastern cities, the problem became theirs. Blacks came into their schools and neighborhoods; sought employment in their stores, factories, shipyards, and government offices.

The painful legacy (cost) of years of inferior schooling became obvious. Tensions were created and exacerbated. Black youngsters who were in the seventh grade in southern segregated, inferior schools often found themselves placed in fourth or fifth grade classes, or worse. Resentful and frustrated, they reacted with sullenness, truancy, dropping-out, or by subjecting themselves to incredibly hard work in an effort to cope with

this new reality. Often unable to find employment, either because of discrimination or lack of skills or both, they became a drain on existing social services as their plight helped to create and expand the "Welfare" system. Such a condition makes it logical to survive by whatever means necessary. Now the social costs were visible to everyone.

Although the grief, pain, and resentment of paying these costs were somewhat muted during the national mobilization for world war II, tensions were building. Lacking adequate education, coming from an oppressive social and economic environment, blacks found themselves at the bottom, even in the armed forces. They were placed in service companies, had to fight and demonstrate to obtain the "opportunity" to defend, bleed, and die for their country. A full wartime economy insured that most would get employment of some kind, but the full extent of social costs was yet to emerge.

Following the end of WW II, blacks enrolled in increasing numbers in institutions of higher education. Many returned to high school or earned their General Education Development certificates in the service. But the peacetime and wartime economies were not the same, nor was there the unifying commitment to the defense and survival of the United States. With the advent of new housing programs, especially those developed under the Federal Housing Administration and the GI Bill, formerly integrated neighborhoods disappeared as whites began to move to the newly-created suburbs which were closed to nonwhites. Segregation of schools, northern style, was the sine qua non of the post war period. As the schools -- after the 1954 Brown decision -- became more segregated in the North, and as the South entered its period of massive resistance, resurrecting

theories of interposition and nullification, the stage was set for the violent explosions of the 1960s.

The romance between blacks and formal education began with full force after Emancipation. It was not an accident that from its inception the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People chose education as its priority. What apparently was not clear to the dominant society were the consequences or social costs of continued denial of equal access. Triggered in large part by confrontations over desegregation, but abetted by continued discrimination in employment, denial of political rights and of public accommodations, the Civil Rights Movement expanded on all fronts. The rest is history and the economic costs can be counted in the millions. The social costs, in suspicion, in hostility, in hatred and in lives were incalculable.

There were other costs. Obviously, for every dollar invested in education, other areas of the society are denied that investment: Individual disposable income, health care, parks, recreational facilities, housing, and/or defense. On the other hand, there are social costs connected with failing to invest in education. As our urban schools became more and more the repositories for minorities and the poor, and as they continue to perform poorly for a significant percentage of their students, we will incur the costs associated with the human capital spawned by such schools. Predictably, we can expect functional illiterates who are inadequately skilled, who have little or no understanding of even the most basic principles of economics, politics or social intercourse. Perhaps most frightening is the emergency of angry and frustrated young Americans. The relationship between years of schooling and other indices of well-being are too well known to recount here in any detail: Health, political participation, income, and status. Without education the positive aspects of these indices become liabilities—or negative social costs.

On the other hand, Bernard Anderson suggests that the energy crisis and emergent energy policies argue strongly for continued, and accelerated improvements in basic education as an essential precondition for occupational advancement for minorities during the next decade. The same argument might be made for all poor people. Minority youth will be at a decided disadvantage in competing with majority youth unless they receive adequate educational preparation.

In a more general sense, current social costs pale into insignificance when one considers the potential future costs. Northcutt estimates the number of adult functional illiterates as approximately twenty-five million. In addition, in the cities we are once again witnessing an increase in the number of dropouts who occupy the bottom rung of the socioeconomic ladder. Some will remember Conant's warning of "social dynamite." The amorphous quality of this problem represents a threat for each individual and for society as a whole. Numbers are significant. Unemployment among black and minority teenagers is another negative cost. In major cities it approaches 50-60 percent and, somehow, does not seem to decline despite the best efforts of government. Speaking on the subject of youth unemployment, Eli Ginzberg observed: "If we want trouble, the way to get it is to ignore the seriousness of this problem...We'll have a living hell."¹²

What is more frightening to me and to other observers, however, is what appears to be a developing "underclass" in America. This underclass cuts across racial lines and is made up of people who are out of school, unemployed, without skills, and without hope. They are, for the most part, young. We ignore their plight at our own peril. As Cliff Wharton

said recently: "The most important capital in any society is not its factories, its houses, its cars, its tools, or even its oil wells. It is the brainpower of its people."¹³

Education - Its Value

The existence of a democracy presupposes the existence of educated, thoughtful men and women who are capable of understanding complex issues and of making decisions about their destinies, whether those issues be expansion of nuclear energy, foreign affairs, urban planning, equal opportunity, national health care or any of a hundred other vital concerns. In a pluralistic society, the production of these benefits can be a unifying force because the leadership to guide and direct a modern society comes from an educated citizenry.

Harold Howe tells the story of an Oxford professor who informed his startled class one day that the only valuable thing their education would give them was the ability to determine "when a man was talking rot." There is more to education than the Oxford professor suggests, but the ability to which he refers is not an inconsiderable contribution in a democracy. With the rapid and important changes in leadership and policies taking place in Washington and other capitals of the world, it will be more necessary than ever for knowledgeable, intelligent citizens to evaluate new policies and performance.

The social benefits of education must be explicitly stated. The public must be made aware of the fact that it receives from, as well as gives to, education. There is a direct relationship between the quality of what is received and what it given. Too many people do not understand that education is more than the mere transmission of factual information; it is a conveyer of benefits and the production of an intelligent, healthy citi-

zenry, is the most obvious one.

For certain groups in our population, the social benefits of education are startling. Jews have achieved a representation in the professions and in other status occupations far exceeding their numbers in the population. They have done this primarily through our educational institutions which have provided the opportunities, education, skills, and understanding which have enabled them largely to overcome prejudice, blatant discrimination and open hostility.

Well-educated black Americans provided the leadership for most of the civil rights victories. Through a quirk of history, educated blacks who found the doors of business, industry and most professions closed to them turned to education. They often became superb teachers and were thus able to transfer their knowledge to generations of black youth. Without this cadre of well-educated and committed teachers, black Americans would not have been able to take advantage of the emergent opportunities.

An important benefit of education is its ability to transfer societal values. Educational institutions play a vital role in this process, although our record of performance is mixed. Obviously the family, the church, and other institutions also play an important role in the development and transmission of values. But none of these institutions is commonly shared by such a large segment of the population. It is no accident that most Americans grow up believing in capitalism, just as most Russians grow up believing in a socialistic economic system. It is no accident that French children grow up believing in their system of government, and Japanese in theirs. In our own country, it is no accident that religious beliefs continue from generation to generation. In fact, it is our pluralism which makes the transmission of these different value systems and beliefs possible. It

seems to me that one of the social benefits of education, particularly public education is providing society with values. A sound education does not avoid questions of values; in this complex world it assists individuals to find the kind of inner direction that leads to sound, moral decisions. David Riesman in The Lonely Crowd wrote about the other-directed mass of individuals who feel helpless about the world around them and are "psychologically dependent on others for clues to the meaning of life."¹⁴ This observation and the experience of John Erlichman, former President Nixon's domestic adviser, illustrate the importance of values:

I'm more and more realizing that I lived 50 years of my life without ever really coming to grips with the very basic question of what is and is not important to me. what is and is not right or wrong, and what is and is not valuable and worthwhile—I've begun a process that my own kids began developing almost from the beginning—developing my own sense of values.¹⁵

While authoritarian indoctrination is certainly anathema to most Americans, it is crucial that value clarification and assisting in value evaluation be essential parts of the educational process at all levels. As the world draws towards two unsavory extremes: On the one hand, a dehumanizing collectivization of body and spirit; on the other hand, a self-indulgent, anarchistic hedonism; we must seek, through education, the elimination of this ideological threat. In our society, with its increasing differentiation and separation along economic, social, racial and ethnic lines, public schools can, and should, serve as laboratories for the development of tolerance, understanding, acceptance and, ultimately, appreciation of and respect for the diversity of our culture.

Social Benefits

To facilitate this discussion, we must ask for definitions: What are social benefits? It seems reasonable to define a social benefit as anything which contributes to the "common good." To further elaborate, one could argue that benefits must be accrued at two levels: The individual and the societal. The question then becomes: How are social benefits manifested? A reasonable answer would be through an increase in the productive use of human resources, both on the individual level and collectively. In an emergent, dynamic environment such as ours, the increased productive use of human resources is clearly a benefit.

Black Americans have always been aware of, and have understood, the social benefits of education, to themselves as individuals, to their race and to society. But so were their oppressors who with persistence and dedication found ways, initially, to deny them access to any education at all and, later, to provide education of such inferior quality that the long-term effects of this denial are still being felt, not only by blacks, but by the total society. Yet blacks considered education the mechanism for proving their worth to the very society which frequently and blatantly denied it. Many black mothers and fathers instilled in their children from an early age the determination to get an education with the admonition that blacks had to be twice as good as whites to be treated as equals. I remember these pleas from my own youth. Chancellor Clifton Wharton of the state University of New York quotes W.E.B. DuBois:

How then shall the leaders of a struggling people be trained and the hands of the risen few strengthened. There can be but one answer. The best and most capable of their youth must be schooled in the colleges and universities of the land.¹⁶

Against these odds, and as a result of the Civil Rights Revolution, and the democratization of education, blacks have graduated from high schools and entered colleges in ever increasing numbers. By the mid 1970s, blacks who represent eleven percent of America's population, now are ten percent of the 10.6 million college students. The social benefits of this change accrue not only to individuals, but to society, in the form of a productive citizenry.

In search of a better life — jobs, education, housing, dignity and freedom — more than six million blacks migrated to places like Chicago, Cleveland, St. Louis, Detroit, Los Angeles, Boston, Philadelphia, New York, and Gary. The results of this massive relocation were mixed. Despite their struggles to gain a better life and education many blacks were disillusioned; the workaday white world was hostile, and most good jobs were closed to them even when they had degrees, diplomas, honors and skills. Some who had acquired education and skills returned to the only community that would receive the black community.

These extraordinary people became the only role models for blacks. They also served as living refutation of the myths and stereotypes accepted and perpetuated by whites. But more important, they served the many needs of the black communities from which they emerged as teachers, counselors, lawyers, dentists, physicians, ministers and journalists. In the process, they made major contributions to the development and improvement of the whole society, not just the black communities. Through their efforts, and those of fair and committed whites, thousands of blacks became gainfully employed, self-sustaining, contributing, tax-paying members of society. These extraordinary people and the others they trained, educated, and inspired, led the assault on discrimination and inequality. This was accomplished first by attempting to insert themselves into the various power structures of society and, later, by

direct assaults upon the bastions of privilege, discrimination and legal oppression. In each phase of the struggle, the leadership was educated, informed and exemplified, individually and collectively, visible symbols of what can be achieved when society strives for full equality.

A few names illustrate the benefits our society has reaped from black Americans: William Hastie and Thurgood Marshall in law, Percy Julian in medicine, Marian Anderson in music, Ralph Ellison in literature, Ralph Bunche in international diplomacy. Paul Robeson whose life and accomplishments spanned many fields--languages, athletics, law, music, theatre -- was villified and found his career destroyed by the very racism he had the temerity and courage to attack and oppose.

Of course, there are more obvious benefits of education, particularly as they relate to meeting various national goals. In wartime, for example, we trained workers without previous factory experience (many of them housewives and adolescents) to operate complex machinery. We developed jets, rockets, and the atomic bomb; we taught crass youth to build, operate, and maintain the most complicated equipment in the history of man. Without the ability and determination to educate our people to meet the crisis, history might have run a different course.

The benefits of education can also be found in the history of agriculture. About 5 percent of the total population of this country feeds the other 95 percent and additional millions of people throughout the world. The high standard of living enjoyed by most Americans could not have been achieved had we not discovered how to provide for the most basic of human needs, food. It was not accomplished by accident, but through education. Think of the role played by the Land Grant Colleges, the agricultural extension stations and labs, the field agents who taught farmers new methods and new uses of machinery by which they could increase their yields.

I hardly need mention the Space Program, so clear is its relationship to education. A single space shot, the Russian Sputnik, was responsible for more curriculum changes in the schools and colleges across this country than any other single event in recent memory. As a result of this new thrust, the graduates of our science programs — engineering, biology, chemistry, physics, and a host of other specialties — succeeded, within ten short years, of breaking the barrier between man and the moon.

We take it for granted that education is the chief, if not the only, means whereby people prepare for most occupations, increase their income and status. Yet, there are less obvious, but equally important social benefits of education: For example, to provide a place and activities for those too young to enter the employment market; to provide a protected and structured environment for children and youth while their parents — increasingly both parents — work outside the home, either by necessity or by choice. Some educational critics and the more romantic reformers recognize and condemn these functions and the consequent benefits, but they seem ill-prepared to present workable alternatives for the care and supervision of millions of children.

And let us not forget the schools as employers. Educational institutions provide jobs, income and status for three of every ten persons (63.8 million Americans).¹⁷ In addition, for the poor and minorities, in particular, education provides the knowledge and skills essential for upward mobility.

More specifically, an essential social benefit of education is the use of schools as a formal system to socialize the young, to teach them to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior, to give them a sense of pride in the history and accomplishments of our

country. In other words, your youth must learn that they are and will always be dependent upon one another. But that is not all our youth must learn. They must be taught independence, a feeling of self-worth, and the skills and abilities which will allow them to reach their personal goals. So the broadest objectives of education, socialization and self-sufficiency, are frequently contradictory. But the tension between them is a creative tension. As a student learns about this contradiction, he should be reminded that he must also learn to reflect upon it and as he reflects, he must criticize. The development and nurturance of this duality will enable each of us to exist and prosper in a dynamic, pluralistic society.

Perhaps one of the most profound social warnings was issued some sixty years ago by former Illinois governor John P. Altgeld:

Slowly, and at fearful cost, mankind is learning that the taking of something for nothing is suicidal, and that the commandment "Love thy neighbor as thyself" is the law of self preservation.¹⁸

Education: Towards a System of Social Indicators

There is still much to be done before we develop an adequate system of social indicators through which we can determine social benefits and social costs of education. Initially, there must be a determination of the purpose of such indicators. One step toward this determination is the acknowledgement that there is a critical need for useful information, information that guides our daily and long-range activities. Secondly, we should not have to choose between educational benefits and costs. These two variables should not be placed in an "either/or" position. Obviously, we must evaluate educational programs by looking at costs, but we must go beyond economic cost and look at social costs. The framework of analysis

must change or we run the risk of responding inappropriately.

Definitions are critical for understanding and analysis. We defined social benefit as any commonly recognized good; social cost is any commonly recognized loss. But cost/benefit analyses must extend beyond the monetary and economic system. Once we recognize that education must be paid for either by social benefits or social costs, we must ask the difficult questions: Where is the balance? What do we want from education? Why do we want it? How do we want it delivered? What are we willing to give? What are our responsibilities? The answers to these questions are difficult to arrive at and even more difficult to implement. This is due in part to the relative nature of social benefits and costs. For example, when we fail to teach a child a marketable skill, each of us to one degree or another reaps the costs in taxes, increased social welfare, and increased social dysfunctions.

Educational problems are not simple; the perception that they are leads us to think solutions are simple. There is a gap between what we are told (theory) and what exists (reality). For example, a police recruit is sent to the police academy and he is taught how to help people and maintain peace. But the reality is that he is assigned to a beat and suddenly discovers that he is regulating human behavior and is bitterly resented. He is shocked that citizens resent his presence and his attempts to regulate their behavior. The policeman has great difficulty assimilating that knowledge. Theory is not reality.

The reality is that education ranks third among selected institutions in the public confidence.¹⁹ Yet, education is the basis for almost all endeavors. Nonetheless, improving the nation's educational system was ranked fifth as a national priority.²⁰ Too often we expect statistics to measure effects, but they tell only a part of the story. For example,

New York spends \$26,000 annually for each prisoner compared to a national average of \$11,742 to educate a child.²¹ Social benefits and costs are relative, but it is precisely this relativity that must be dealt with by policymakers.

Where do we start? A possible beginning is to deal with our need for information. The information gathering process is continuous and, at a minimum, should include:

- o A Needs Assessment—What are society's basic needs? What are the individual's basic needs?
- o An Environmental Analysis—What is the condition of our environment in our own culture and country? What is our world environment?
- o Synthesis—How do the needs of the individual and society intersect and connect with our own and the world environment? What role can and should education play?

Once the information gathering process is operating with a reasonable degree of efficiency (it is never completed) we will have the beginnings of a guide that will lend focus to what we want, what we need and what we have the capacity and will to do. Education must strive for a clear understanding of what it can do. It cannot do everything, nor can it be all things to all people. We will have our measure of the social benefits and social costs of education when we can provide tangible and useful answers to these questions:

1. Who benefits; who loses?
2. How do we benefit; how do we lose?
3. Why do we benefit; why do we lose?
4. When do we benefit; when do we lose?

Specifically, social scientists and others must develop a framework that includes the social benefits of education/the social costs of education, the development of anticipatory rather than reactive policies, modalities and the establishment of a system to monitor emergent events and their effects on education.

All the elements cited are critical because enlightened policy development demands truly pluralistic participation. Finally, there is no single, or better, commonly-shared and recognized public conveyor than education.

* * *

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SCHOOL INEQUALITY IN THE EMERGING "WELFARE" STATE:

DOES IT MAKE SENSE?

John D. Owen

SCHOOL INEQUALITY IN THE EMERGING "WELFARE" STATE:

DOES IT MAKE SENSE?

Now, as never before in the history of America, there is a way of looking at the question of educational inequality which offers every taxpayer a stake in equalization. Inequality's social costs--its effects on those it harms most, poor people and blacks--are well known; but its fiscal consequences are only beginning to be recognized. As a result of the social changes of the nineteen sixties, most notably the growth of a welfare state, the poor now impose such an impressive fiscal burden upon the taxpaying community that it has become worthwhile --even acting on a very narrow definition of self interest--for the latter to take steps to reduce the number of the poor by expanding educational opportunity.

It is a paradox that the need for an even more egalitarian school policy should be established just when there is rising opposition to further change and, in some areas, a withdrawal from earlier commitments to broader opportunities. Present resistance to educational change can be seen as part of a reaction both to the entire notion of large scale social experiments, many of which have failed conspicuously, and to the programs which shifted both educational and other kinds of resources to the poor during the sixties. Expanding educational opportunity is seen now--even though incorrectly--as a way of again increasing the taxpayer's burden. Change has also run afoul of racial divisions, resulting especially in the so-called "white flight" to the suburbs. Commitments to minority student scholarships made by institutions whose sources of funds have now dwindled have in

many cases also faltered.

There are recent gains to note in the area of state and especially federal policy. Yet, resistance to further change has indisputably slowed progress toward equality of educational opportunity.

But while it is easy enough to chronicle the retreat from the goals of the sixties, and to point out the evident reasons for this backsliding, the central paradox remains that the objective, financial conditions of the nineteen seventies and eighties provide the justification for an aggressive policy of reducing school inequality which the earlier decades did not.

For many years, the economic arguments for reducing inequality had to take a back seat, while the case was argued chiefly on moral, political, or philosophic grounds. Although economists joined in the discussion, their reasoning proved unpersuasive for a variety of reasons. One was that even if it were true that, because of "under-investment" in the education of the poor, more education would increase their productivity, and hence the national product, it had to be acknowledged that most of the income derived from additional education would accrue to the recipients and not to the taxpaying community. The better educated poor would pay somewhat higher taxes, it was recognized, but, generally speaking, they themselves would consume most of their increased production in the form of goods and services.

Some economists argued that because employers would benefit from a better-skilled labor force, they had a special interest in improving the educational opportunities of the poor. Yet economic models show most of the gains from an increase in the quality of labor supply as once again in the possession of the beneficiaries and a relatively small

share as profits.

A number of economists have tried to circumvent that problem by devising ingenious plans for loans and repayment schemes to raise funds for education. Some are straightforward loan arrangements, and in others, there are opportunities for students to sell shares of themselves or of their expected future incomes to the highest bidders. At present, however, programs of this kind meet only a small share of the total costs of higher education and have no application whatsoever at the elementary and secondary school level.

But the development of an emerging "welfare" state in the United States at last has introduced, de facto, a device which compensates the taxpayer for his education subsidies. When education enables the lower class child to better himself, he leaves the welfare rolls, and benefits society as well. The taxpayer thus can confidently expect that a substantial portion of the resulting increment in national income will accrue to him.

This mechanism has operated for only a few years. Many of the federal welfare programs originated with the New Deal--an earlier version of the present Aid to Families of Dependent Children (AFDC) began as part of a Federal program in the thirties--but when World War II ended unemployment, federal welfare programs contracted sharply; only when poverty was rediscovered during the nineteen sixties, and the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty began, was funding for the still-existing programs increased dramatically. AFDC was one of those and it quadrupled in size between 1965 and 1972. Although an effort by conservative forces to prune welfare rolls stabilized the growth in AFDC, other new programs proliferated. About six percent of households now receive food stamps

which cost five billion dollars per year. Federal outlays for food, housing, and medical care for the poor now total between two and three times those for ordinary welfare.

The movement of the nineteen sixties to extend economic and social benefits to the poor brought with it important new government initiatives to reduce schooling inequalities. The first comprehensive national legislation for federal aid to education -- the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 -- enabled the federal government to provide aid for schools in inner city and other poor neighborhoods. The Civil Rights Act, which had been passed in 1964 -- and its subsequent enforcement in the courts -- ended the traditional practice of total segregation of pupils and teachers by race in the South, and reduced it in northern and border cities. In higher education, both public and private colleges broadened their racial bases, by offering minority scholarships. In the public system, the expansion of the system of community colleges extended college opportunities to the working class.

This effort, however, fell far short of eliminating school inequalities. At the end of the decade, enough segregation persisted so that a black child was much more likely than a white child to have a black teacher and black classmates;¹ most suburban schools offered more resources than those in the inner city; and educational attainment, as measured by years of school completed, still showed a strong class bias. Moreover -- in the seventies -- in some areas, there has been a withdrawal toward inequality. Hence, if inequality in education is to be eliminated, a many-faceted program still must be undertaken.

Do Education Subsidies Affect Welfare Costs?

The justification for the reduction of inequalities must be based on empirical evidence -- something beyond a mere recital of increases in welfare spending in a setting of large-scale school inequalities. The skepticism which stems from the exaggerated claims made for some of the social programs of the sixties requires that the assertion that additional education will reduce welfare incidence should be founded on hard evidence. The available data do support this statement.

Proportion of Black Female Population Receiving U.S. Aid to Families With Dependent Children Benefits -- 1969

<u>Age</u>	<u>Education (Years of School)</u>			
	<u>0 - 11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13 - 15</u>	<u>16 +</u>
20-24	22%	8%	2%	0%
25-29	22	8	5	0
30-34	25	8	5	0
35-44	14	7	4	0
45-54	6	2	2	0

Source: Unpublished worksheets of the National Center for
Social Statistics

Surveys of AFDC mothers indicate a sharp reduction in Welfare incidence as education increases, especially when it is extended beyond the high school level. To demonstrate that the apparent reduction in welfare incidence is not due to factors other than education, one survey of

welfare incidence which provides more information (the Parnes Continuous Life Histories Study) was examined in detail. Apparent welfare reduction gains from education were found not to be exaggerated.² Whether or not a woman is on welfare turns out to be determined much more by years of education than by social class origins (education and occupation of parents), race or place of residence. It was also possible to construct the chain of events which suggests that education reduces welfare incidence: the woman with more years of education is less likely to be the head of a fatherless family; if so, it is likely to be a smaller family. She proved to be more able to obtain support payments for her family, and if necessary, to find employment. But even if all these factors are held constant, the better-educated woman is less likely to be on welfare.

A more detailed analysis of these data continues to support the interpretation that a welfare-reducing payoff may be expected from additional years of schooling. Yet, the results of studies of this kind are all subject to a particular variety of criticism. The economic studies of the return on "human capital," some of which have endeavored to gauge the earnings-payoff to education, have been criticized for failing to take into account the influence of character differences, such as ambition and industry, on earnings. Studies of the welfare-reducing payoff to education, it must be acknowledged, also are open to the same charges: that hard-working individuals of "better character" would be those who would choose to stay in school and would, under any circumstances, be the ones least likely to become dependent on welfare. It is impossible to refute common sense arguments of this kind, except to say that in economics strictly

controlled laboratory experiments cannot be carried on. Economists must rely upon associations among variables for their conclusions about cause and effect. The results of the studies of the influence of education on welfare incidence appear to be as reliable as most other studies of payoffs to education which have been carried on by empirical methods.

This study showed that education exerts a powerful negative influence on the need for welfare. Using the figures on incidence by age and years of education for blacks, it was found that if each woman had a mere two additional years of school, AFDC incidence would be reduced amazingly by more than forty percent. A calculation of education costs to the state in that year for black women in those age groups discloses that the entire cost of the additional education could be financed by the resulting reduction in the cost of the AFDC program alone. But even this is an underestimate of the savings, since the parents of blacks also pay taxes (in fact, the sales and property taxes used to finance schooling are regressive, falling heavily on blacks); hence the cost to the "rest of society" is exaggerated by this comparison. Inasmuch as the cost of AFDC represents only a fraction of the total cost of welfare, the full savings from reduced dependency are much larger. In a study for Congress in 1972 of the costs to the nation of undereducating the poor, economist Henry Levin concludes that they are at least three times as large as the savings contemplated from the reduction in AFDC rolls alone.³ Nor are the gains to society entirely financial. A drop in the rate of crime among unemployed teenage dropouts is one of the likely consequences of reduced unemployment in that age group.

If the analysis of the short-term role of education in reducing welfare incidence is correct, society can expect that education will play an even more beneficial part in the more-distant future. Welfare benefits, the levels of which are set by reference to constantly increasing "poverty line" minimum standards of consumption, increase continually. What was a minimum standard of \$3,000 during the Johnson Administration has about doubled. This amount already is widely considered too low and the demands for revisions in the "poverty line" range up to \$18,000 or more. The "poverty line" will undoubtedly continue to rise, if not to such spectacular levels, at least at the same rate as per capita income. If the present trend towards a welfare state continues in the United States as it has in Western Europe, the state will set minimum consumption levels for the poor that will be continually increasing. If we continue to sustain a high rate of inflation, the result will be a greater rate of increase in the poverty line.

Under such circumstances, present investments in the education of the poor have manifold advantages for taxpayers.³ Investment in education has a post-school payoff period of forty to fifty years, and during that period, as successive levels of support for the poor rise, the taxpayers' gains from reduced welfare rolls increase. This argument takes on additional meaning within a welfare system so structured that it rewards those who do not work by taxing the earnings of the working poor and effectively reducing levels of support along with increases in earnings. Because individuals who are producing at low levels have relatively little financial incentive to work under this system, it is crucial that education be extended widely, in order to

raise the productivity of the greatest number of workers beyond the point at which it could be tempting not to work and to rely instead on state support.

Education is well-suited to the role of maintaining work incentives in a welfare state. In addition to developing individual skills, it is a major force in socializing the young to the values and habits they need to work for pay. This particular function of education has been fiercely attacked by left-of-center critics, but a more positive interpretation may emerge as a society develops in which motives other than the threat of economic deprivation are relied upon to get the nation's work done.

The Argument for Political Returns

The recent buttressing of the economic self-interest case for improving educational opportunities for persons with lower incomes has a parallel in the developing recognition of the potential for political gains from educating the poor. Assuming that political power in the U.S. is equally distributed on the principle of one-man, one-vote, it always has been argued plausibly that equality of educational opportunity fosters the efficient working of the political system. Yet, in reality, as social critics point out, political power has been biased in favor of the rich and against the poor. As recently as forty or fifty years ago, many groups such as southern blacks, poor white sharecroppers, recent European immigrants, or industrial workers in company towns wielded far less than their proportionate share of political power. But today, although an egalitarian society is not looming, urbanization and legal enfranchisement have

greatly increased the relative power of the lower and working classes as evidenced by their increased participation in the political process. This brings new relevance to the old argument that intelligent, universal participation in the nation's affairs demands that all citizens have the education necessary to become politically sophisticated.

Where Do We Go from Here?

It is not likely that the next few months will witness a resumption of the drive for educational equality. But what will be the long-term outcome? Is equality of educational opportunity a viable objective that should be pursued, or should it be seen as a goal that will be quietly shelved, like other ill-fated schemes conceived during the sixties for social betterment?

Such a discussion must recognize that, apart from the current conservative mood, there are a variety of sources of resistance to educational change. There still are individualists who argue that help for the poor should be restricted to cash payments, so as to assure freedom of choice to the recipient. But, the strength of this point of view as an objection to education subsidies probably will fade as it becomes clear over the years that cash payments do indeed bias choice. It is the free choice of whether or not to work that is at risk. Only if such payments are accompanied by other programs, such as education subsidies, which increase work incentives, will the work-leisure choice be comparatively unbiased.

Another voice in opposition to this argument claims that educational upgrading will create both a surplus of well-educated workers and a corresponding shortage of the unskilled. But the moderate increase in

quality and extent of schooling, which would result from equalizing lifetime expenditures for education between the poor and the middle class, would not necessarily close the gap in academic achievement between the poor and the remainder of the population. Cultural factors, related to family background and surroundings, could be expected to perpetuate that gap. As a result, upgrading, instead of producing a plethora of doctors and lawyers, could in the next decades increase the supply of the competent clerks and technicians which an expanding technological economy requires.

The explicit recognition that colleges and universities may be expected to prepare graduates for high-grade clerical and for sub-professional occupations raises questions about curricula, academic standards, and related subjects, all of which invite inquiry into the nature and function of post-secondary education. Such a different way of looking at the traditional structure and functions of the colleges and universities brings forth negative reactions which tend to coalesce and constitute another source of opposition to equality of educational opportunity. Education in America, however, repeatedly has endured struggles such as these whenever changes in the social origins and vocational goals of students have necessitated modifications in educational framework and policy. The challenge of the present state of affairs is in the need to provide a culturally and politically meaningful liberal arts education, along with the training that is needed for industrial and technical careers.

A policy of aggressively combating the remaining inequalities in education will encounter formidable opposition even after the end of the prevailing mood of delay and backsliding. The best hope for

overcoming these obstacles lies in the growing realization that, because we are living in a "welfare state," all of American society stands to benefit, morally and financially, from progress through education toward an equal distribution of skills and achievement. The logic of this point of view can provide the driving force to achieve that outcome.

ENDNOTES

1. See John D. Owen, "The Distribution of Educational Resources in Large American Cities," Journal of Human Resources, (Winter 1972).

2. The statistical techniques employed included Logit and ordinary least squares regression.

3. See Henry M. Levin, The Costs to the Nation of Inadequate Education, U.S. Senate, Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1972).

4. See the discussion in John D. Owen, School Inequality and the Welfare State (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975).

INVESTMENT AND DISINVESTMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Charles S. Benson

INVESTMENT AND DISINVESTMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION¹

The general prosperity of the post-World War II era has not been good for America's cities. Today, many central city areas serve as storage bins for people who have no productive role to play in the market economy. In this regard, there is a striking similarity between our cities and those of the third world. New York City is more like Karachi and Calcutta and Bogota in terms of the economic welfare of its low-income people than it is like Paris and London and Stockholm.

Yet, we are a rich country. We have buried riches in investment in the good life in the suburbs. We have followed a corresponding pattern of disinvestment in the cities.

Disinvestment in cities is displayed in many different forms. Some, like the physical deterioration of low-income neighborhoods, are tangible. Some, like the lack of high quality jobs for inner city residents, are readily measurable. Other forms of disinvestment are neither tangible nor readily measurable but may be inferred. Among these is the unwillingness of central city youth to make investments in their own futures, particularly those investments of time and energy that are required to be successful in school.

I believe that the different faces of disinvestment represent a single, major problem. It is an economic problem. Tinkering with its symptoms, such as the alienation of students, is doomed to failure. It is a good thing to spend more money on central city schools, to hire more teachers and counselors, to improve the laboratories, and to build athletic facilities. But student performance in central city schools

will show dramatic improvement only as the economic life of inner city residents shows dramatic improvement. The availability of high quality jobs for inner city youth is a necessary condition for the successful operation of inner city schools.

Disinvestment

What has been happening in our older central cities may be described as a "drain of resources."

One of the most striking characteristics of the urban poverty area is the continual drain of resources out of the area and into other sectors of the economy. Although largely unmeasured, and perhaps unmeasurable, the drain includes savings, physical capital, human resources, and income. As a result, urban poverty areas are left without the most important resources needed for development and improvement, and the economic infrastructure is seriously deficient. The net result of the drain of resources from the (central city) is to create an ... underdeveloped area in the midst of an otherwise progressive and expanding economy.... The major resource of the area is its manpower, which is used by the rest of the economy as a pool of low wage labor.... Although the charge of colonial exploitation may be an exaggeration, there are striking similarities to the old-fashioned colonial economy.²

Investment means giving up present satisfactions for future ones. Rich people can invest with little or no pain. The poor typically feel pain even when they live in an area where disinvestment is taking place, where tomorrow's resources are being used to pay for today's needs.

Investment implies choices among alternatives; so does disinvestment. As a nation, we have chosen to put our new, up-to-date installations—factories, schools, houses, and recreational facilities—in the suburbs. Our transportation policies and our financial policies with respect to the acquisition and the development of real physical assets have been designed toward that end.

In 1949, Congress passed the National Housing Act. The stated goal was a decent home and a suitable environment for every American family. The following twenty-five years set a pattern of building home and work environments that was new to the world—massive middle-class suburbanization. Forty-seven million new housing units were built; most of them were detached, single family residences constructed outside the central city. Between 1950 and 1970, the suburban population grew by 34 million people, an increase of over 160 percent; central city population went up by 15 million or 30 percent.³ As of 1970, the majority of people living in metropolitan areas lived in suburbia.

Suburban housing is mainly private in the United States. In no post-World War II year did public housing represent more than five percent of all new construction.⁴ Most of this small amount of public housing was located in central cities. Moving to the suburbs, then, usually involves a family planning to live in private housing and, typically, buying—not renting—a house. So, they need a down payment and credit standing as well. Because cheap public transportation, covering intersuburban as well as suburb-city connections is usually not available, the family needs an automobile. This became more, not less, necessary as industry followed the householders to the suburbs.

For these financial reasons, among other reasons, such as racial discrimination in the housing market, we could not expect all households to share in the suburban celebration of family life in America. Twenty years after the Housing Act of 1949, the Kerner Commission sadly reported that more than half of the country's nonwhite families lived in central cities and nearly two-thirds of these families lived in neighborhoods characterized by substandard housing and urban blight.⁵ "The solution [the suburban solution] for one group of Americans has been the problem for another."⁶

Government, especially the federal government, was closely involved in the transfer of economic activity from the central city to the suburbs. To build suburbia, with its homes, shopping centers, and smokeless factories, required enormous credit reserves to hold down rates of interest to tolerable levels. These the federal government provided. The public sector—schools, parks, and libraries—were financed at particularly low rates of interest, because interest on state and local bonds is exempt from federal taxes. (This is an inefficient form of subsidy and one that offers immediate financial benefits mainly to owners of large amounts of capital). Suburban development requires access: People must be able to get back and forth to work and to shopping centers and places of amusement. The federal solution to this problem was to underwrite the construction of freeways, not public transport. There are also housing subsidies. Landlords benefit from accelerated depreciation schedules and from reduced rates of taxation on capital gains (as compared to taxation of ordinary income). Home owners deduct mortgage interest and property taxation of their homes.

(A Brookings study indicates that the value of these latter two tax provisions affecting homeowners is \$10 billion annually).⁷ These subsidies do not appear explicitly in the federal budget and are therefore rarely discussed.

Private sector jobs have been disappearing in major central cities as suburbanization continues and the cities increasingly are home to the poverty-stricken. A few figures illustrate these points. Between 1958 and 1972, Chicago lost 104,300 jobs in manufacturing and 63,100 in wholesale and retail trade; New York lost 138,500 in manufacturing and 73,500 in wholesale and retail trade; Cleveland lost 43,600 in manufacturing and 31,000 in wholesale and retail trade; Newark lost 38,600 in manufacturing and 33,700 in wholesale and retail trade; St. Louis lost 38,600 in manufacturing and 33,700 in wholesale and retail trade; and Philadelphia lost 84,000 in manufacturing and 30,200 in wholesale and retail trade.⁸ Between 1975 and 1976, years of relative prosperity, the number of poor persons and families decreased by 902,000 in the United States. The number of such persons and families living inside central cities increased by 392,000.⁹

Disinvestment in Public Services

In the United States some efforts have been made to relocate government offices such as the Social Security Administration, in inner cities, apparently to compensate for the loss of private sector jobs. This policy is better than no policy at all, but it is deficient on at least two grounds: (a) these kinds of government installations do not attract other forms of economic activity into the area to the degree that private manufacturing firms would; (b) the desk jobs these installa-

ations offer do not appeal to many young males, particularly those who find satisfaction in working with their hands and minds.

But, in general, we see a slackening of public commitment to provide services to, much less to rebuild, the inner cities. Between 1967 and 1977, the Gross National Product in the United States, as measured in real (1972) dollars, rose from 1,007.7 billion to 1,337.6 billion, an increase of 32.7 percent. In the same period, federal, state and local government purchases of goods and services rose from \$248.3 billion to \$271.1 billion, a rise of 9.2 percent. Purchases of goods and services by the federal government fell in real terms from \$125.3 billion to \$101.4 billion, a decline of 19.1 percent in the ten year span.¹⁰ In cities, the number of public employees of city governments themselves increased at an average annual rate of 0.9 percent between 1972 and 1977, but there was a decline of 1.4 percent in employees of city-operated schools and colleges, of 0.8 percent in public welfare, of 1.2 percent in hospitals, of 1.4 percent in city health services, and of 1.2 percent in public transit. There were increases in employment of 2.1 percent in police, 4.1 percent in airports (not used much by inner city people), 4.0 percent in corrections, and 3.3 percent in financial administration. Perhaps the only happy point is that employment in parks and recreation rose at an annual rate of 4.1 percent.¹¹ (All figures are average annual rates of change.)

Conditions may get worse. California is a land of pioneers. Its government pioneered the budget surplus and with Proposition 13 its citizens gave focus to a national tax revolt. What is happening now in California, long a leader in the provision of public goods and services?

The Director of Finance, State of California, has released data on the initial impact of Proposition 13. In city areas, the services that have been cut most severely are libraries, parks, and recreation. He reports also that there have been reductions in the salary budgets of public schools and community colleges.¹² In short, the impact has fallen on services used substantially by young people.

Medrich and Rubin have examined these points further:

In a very real sense children have already suffered in the wake of Proposition 13 and similar proposals to limit government revenues. Although some of the initial effects of the California initiative have been temporarily postponed by the drawing down of the huge state surplus, many children's services have already been reduced or terminated. Immediately after the June election most school districts cancelled summer school activities. In the view of the state, if not all local school boards, summer school was felt to be the least essential, most easily cut educational service. A statewide survey found that during the summer there were virtually no other childcare alternatives available.

Essentially it has been the human side of children's services that have been hit hardest. There are fewer supervised programs for pre-adolescents, reduced hours and facilities, and a narrower range of activities. Municipal services for children are considerably less flexible today than they have been in the past. Further, there is less opportunity to tailor programs to meet the needs of children from different backgrounds and virtually no capacity for "outreach."¹³

The Special Case of Urban Education

In too many instances urban education exists in an environment of deterioration, of rundown houses, where the outdoor life of children is crowded onto asphalt and concrete areas and where adult morale is depressed by very high rates of unemployment.

My introduction to urban education (aside from my years as a student) took place in 1957 when, as a member of a local planning team from Harvard, I recommended to the city of Pawtucket, in the middle of winter, that it immediately close fourteen of its twenty-two schools. We judged these schools to be physically unsafe for the students who were in them. Several were out-and-out fire traps, and at least one of these was used by physically handicapped students. Despite the winter, the city closed nine schools, limited the use of two others, and put its remaining institutions on double shifts, even though this increased the chances of traffic accidents involving young children as they went home in the afternoon darkness. There had been sufficient disinvestment in that city's school system to warrant drastic action.¹⁴

The face of urban education has not changed much since 1960, though the color of the faces of students in urban schools has. Even a new city like Los Angeles has only 30 percent Anglo children in its public schools.

In Northern California, in the city of Walnut Creek, there is a large, beautifully located high school called Northgate. It stands on a gentle slope of hills just beyond a neighborhood of handsome homes. The school is well equipped with laboratories, open library spaces, and an abundant array of shops, theaters, and gyms. Outside are playing fields, large and green with grass. By contrast, McClymonds High in Oakland is located in an older building on a busy city street in the flats. The students are virtually all minority. By the enthusiasm of the school nurse, Isabelle Dishroom, the students have become interested in tennis, and the McClymond's team is now one of the top-ranking teams in Northern California. The students were recently given new rackets

by the Northern California Tennis Association, "as the Mayor looked on." But, the Oakland Tribune for November 14, 1978, reported: "The tennis courts haven't been resurfaced since 1952. The side of one court has sunk a couple of feet. There are so many cracks in the courts that they are practically unplayable.... Mayor Wilson, a McClymonds High graduate, calls the courts' disrepair 'a tough problem.' But he offered only one possible solution. 'It's up to interested people in the community to provide the funds.'" In spite of the publicity, the courts had still not been repaired by late February 1979.

The distinction between suburban and central city schools shows up most strongly in the contrasting recreational facilities. Middle class parents discovered long ago that good sports programs relieve tensions of young people and help them keep their minds on their studies in the hours when they are supposed to be studying.

The visitor from abroad who is interested in educational policy issues and who has read about developments in the United States would be astounded. He will have read about our reform movement in educational finance. He will be sure that we have been working hard to redress balances, to improve the lot of the hundreds of thousands of low income youth who go to school in central cities. What has gone wrong?

School Finance Reform

The continuing deterioration of urban schools and the departure of middle class families to private schools and to the suburbs is a natural result of a decade and a half of the particular kind of school finance reform we have perfected. I do not speak of reform measures having to do with school integration but of the finance reform effort

that led to and was followed by the Serrano case. In a prior case, McInnis v. Shapiro, (1969) the plaintiff group was made up of needy children in Illinois who argued that they were deprived of sufficient educational resources to show reasonable progress in school achievement. The court in turn complained it could not make judgments about the relative needs of students.¹⁵ In Serrano, the plaintiffs were not school children themselves, but low-wealth school districts, which contended that they had insufficient local taxable resources to provide school services of reasonable quality unless the local residents were willing to subject themselves to onerous and unfair local tax burdens. Cities, by and large, are fictionally high-wealth school districts. Hence, the great concentrations of low-income children in central cities miraculously became a privileged class from whom resources were to be withdrawn for the benefit of middle-income children living in suburban districts.

Following the studies on school finance by Arthur Wise and John Coons, the California Supreme Court, from 1971-1977, favored a kind of "negative doctrine" of equality, in which the magnitudes at issue were readily measurable.¹⁶ The doctrine is: the quality of education shall not be a function of wealth except the wealth of the state as a whole. The measurable quantities are school expenditures per student in a school district (representing quality of education) and assessed valuation of taxable property per student in the district (representing wealth). The effects of the California ruling spread across the nation, until now they affect school finance practices in a majority of states.

One problem with this approach is that by substituting the school district for the low-income student as the target of action, we direct

our reform money rather indiscriminately. Low wealth districts may serve rich families—for example, a district populated by young doctors and lawyers and having no non-residential property in its tax base. A rich district may include hundreds of thousands of low-income students—New York and San Francisco are cases in point. But New York and San Francisco appear richer than they are because (a) many of their students do not show up in their counts of average daily attendance, being truant or in private schools, and it is on the basis of such counts that relative wealth is measured, (b) their schools have high levels of necessary cost per student, and (c) such cities must tax themselves very heavily for nonschool expenditures.

The substance of school finance reform can be illustrated by some work that the California Senate Education Committee requested the author and a group of his colleagues at Berkeley to undertake in the early days of Serrano. We were asked to develop and price out a set of alternative responses by the state legislature to Serrano I.¹⁷ In developing alternatives to "meet Serrano," our objectives grew out of our beliefs that school finance reform should address (a) school problems first and (b) the needs of low-income people second. These are debatable positions. Indeed, the cynical might say that if these objectives were paramount, the school finance movement was doomed from the beginning.

Nevertheless, we proceeded in our objectives. We accepted the notion that the preferred response to school finance inequities was tax base qualization, now called District Power Equalizing (DPE). The procedure is for the state to establish a schedule relating local tax rates to school expenditures per student. Any two districts that levy

a school tax at the same rate are empowered to spend the same sum of dollars per student, that and only that, regardless of how much or how little that tax rate yields from the local fisc. It is as if all districts had exactly the same local tax base (wealth) per student. In poor districts the state makes up differences between the local yield and the expenditure per student the DPE schedule calls for. The state siphons off the excess revenue in rich districts for redistribution to poor districts.

Given our beliefs about the purposes of school finance reform, we had to deal with the following facts: (1) most students from low-income families in California live in large cities; (2) most large cities had (have) property wealth per student at approximately the state average; (3) San Francisco on the other hand, is a very property-rich and high-spending school district; (4) there are concentrations of low-income people in industrial tax havens, such as Emeryville. The first two facts mean that a simple tax base equalization scheme, such as DPE with unweighted student count or without expanded categorical grants directed toward low-income populations, would be a washout as far as the majority of low-income students are concerned. Points (3) and (4) mean that we were unwilling to try to help low-income populations in San Francisco (and in such places as Emeryville) by any device that might result in across-the-board property tax relief because the primary beneficiaries, in the short-term at least, would be owners of large amounts of capital. Indeed, we thought it appropriate that school tax rates rise in San Francisco and Emeryville.

Our terms of reference required us to price out in full the kind of tax base equalization called for in Serrano. It was expensive and

this is an important point. In Serrano the target is low wealth districts, not low-income people, and an awful lot of money spills over to middle-income households in this kind of tax base equalization. This money is in competition with state money for low-income students. There is, however, no effective pressure from state courts to see that low-income students get preferred treatment, as is intended in various federal acts, so low-wealth districts are likely to win out over low-income students at the state level of policy.

No matter how we juggled our formulas back in 1972, we could find no satisfactory single arrangement that would do three things at once: (a) provide the tax base equalization required in Serrano; (b) improve the relative standing of schools attended by low-income youth; and (c) protect low-income families in such places as San Francisco from the financial consequences of the appropriate upward adjustments of school tax rates. So what we did was make a tri-partite recommendation: tax base equalization (DPE), estimated to cost \$334 million; improved categorical grants, mainly in compensatory education, \$500 million; and income-specified household tax relief, including renters, (property tax circuit breaker), \$435 million. Thus, what has come to be designated as "school finance reform" represents less than a third of the resource commitment to educational reform, more broadly defined. This is still our sense of the appropriate order of priorities.

The legislature, of course, did not vote our recommendation. Instead, it passed Senate Bill 90, which had two main effects: to hold school expenditures per student below the rate of inflation in high spending districts and, second, to push down school tax rates in such high spending (generally high-wealth) places. Disparities in expendi-

tures lessened a bit, but disparities in tax rates widened. As the Proposition 13 experience has shown all too well, landlords are not eager to pass along property tax reductions to their tenants, so we doubt that low-income renters in San Francisco got much benefit from the Senate Bill 90 property tax reductions. Certainly, low-income children and parents in San Francisco received little benefit from the limitation on school expenditure. In short, the results from Senate Bill 90 were exactly the opposite from those we had been aiming for in our report. Unfortunately, low-income people in San Francisco do not have much choice about where else to live, since they can hardly join the wealthy crowd in Marin.

Assembly Bill 65 of 1977 was a better bill, since it addressed the problem of school tax rate disparities (but without benefit of an effective circuit breaker) and since it included improved categorical grants, but it cannot go into effect. Given the combination of Proposition 13, which equalizes tax rates everywhere in the state, and the Serrano case, which says that any two school districts that levy the same tax rate should have equal expenditures per student, there is no way basic school expenditures in San Francisco and Beverly Hills will not be leveled down to the state average. The results in the two places are quite different. In Beverly Hills, parents are making up for the cuts by private donations and are also buying supplementary educational services in the private market; in San Francisco, parents in low-income neighborhoods do not have the financial means to do either of these things. And existing categorical programs, including school improvement programs and reading programs, are in jeopardy because of the need to find money for increases in teachers' salaries.

We contend that: (1) the school finance reform movement has attracted wide support because it is assumed that low-income students and their families are primary beneficiaries; (2) main definitions of school finance reform are narrow, in that they emphasize the approach of tax base equalization and measure successful implementation as expenditure (per student) equalization and fiscal neutrality; (3) the narrow definition is likely to miss the target of low-income students/low-income families in most states because large numbers of them live in property-rich districts (large cities and industrial tax havens) and where the situation is otherwise, adults exploit the benefit of tax base equalization for tax relief, not school improvement. This latter is, of course, the New Jersey case, and while it is clear that low-income students in Newark have not been helped, qua students, it is quite unclear that low-income families, mainly renters, have been helped either, because property tax reductions are not always passed along to renters.

How can one say that the definitions of school finance reform are "narrow"? We shall quote from three widely-circulated brochures designed to inform the public about this issue. Each of these emphasizes two criteria of reform: (a) creating a situation in which expenditures per student are equal, without regard to the fact that some districts, central cities especially, have disproportionate numbers of students who, by federal standards, at least, require extraordinary services; (b) creating a situation where any remaining differences in expenditure per student are equalized in terms of school tax rates, i.e., higher spending districts have higher school tax rates, although cities may be restricted in their ability to pay for schools by the

fact that their non-school public costs are unusually high. The condition of matching school tax rates to expenditure per student is called "fiscal neutrality."

School Finance Reform in the States, 1978, published by the Education Commission of the States, says: "There are two basically different definitions of equality: fiscal neutrality and expenditure per pupil equality."¹⁸ This statement is in the chapter, "Public Policy Issues in School Finance Reform," which begins with thirteen pages on matters dealing with interdistrict equalization, then shifts to politics, teacher retirement, etc., and finally, some twenty-four pages into the chapter, devotes two and a half pages to "low-income and minority students and urban school finance," of which a half page is on American Indians.

The National Institute of Education's policy document on school finance reform, Plain Talk about School Finance, also published in 1978, develops a "school finance plan" with lots of details on tax base equalization.¹⁹ Only one page deals with categorical aid.²⁰ There is a remarkable statement on page 31: "... one can get a good idea of how equitable that system is by merely 'eyeballing' a rank distribution table." Nothing about differential student needs in that observation!

Campaigning for Fair School Finance, 1978, published by the League of Women Voters Education Fund, has an Appendix A, "Four basic approaches to equity in education finance."²¹ These are full state assumption, a foundation program, a guaranteed tax base, and combinations thereof. The reader may conclude that one of these devices of dealing with school district finance will produce equity, but nothing is said about the special problems of cities in this appendix.

The results of school finance reform activity for inner-city youth have not been favorable. Data collected by the National Conference of State Legislatures, show changes in expenditures per student from 1970 to 1975 (i.e., from one or two years prior to the enactment of reform legislation in any of the states to two or three years after the passage of such legislation.) In the East, the following cities were below regional average change in expenditures--Bridgeport, Hartford, Washington, Baltimore, Springfield, Worcester, Jersey City, Newark, Patterson, Syracuse, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Providence. In the Midwest--Fort Wayne, Gary, Indianapolis, Des Moines, Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, St. Louis, Omaha, Akron, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo, and Youngstown. New York City did well, increasing its expenditures per student to nearly twice the regional average, but then New York State, up to now, has not joined in the school reform movement to strive for tax base equalization.²²

Robert Brischetto and David Vaughan have accumulated evidence on the effects of school finance reform on poor and minority students in six states known to have modified their educational finance system in the wake of the Serrano decision.²³ One of the exercises Brischetto and Vaughan undertake is to compare per student expenditures before and after reform in California, Colorado, Michigan, New Mexico, Texas, and Florida, with students classified as "poor" and "non-poor." In none of the six states did the poor students' expenditures advance appreciably relative to the non-poor. Florida is especially interesting because that state is commonly regarded as having undertaken possibly the most comprehensive measures of school finance reform in the nation. In 1972-73, however, the poor student had \$949 and the non-poor

\$955. In 1975-76, the poor had \$1,358 and the non-poor \$1,379.²⁴

New Jersey is a state where even conventional school finance reform should have worked in helping the poor, because the cities of New Jersey are property poor. We quote from a recent report on the changes in New Jersey and how they have affected Newark:

In 1977-78, two years after the enactment of Chapter 212, Newark's total expenditures per pupil (current expense budget) were \$1,912.05. That year, Newark spent 4.1 percent below the State Average, \$1,990.74; and 4.5 percent below the Essex County Average, \$1,998.13. In 1974-75, prior to the enactment of Chapter 212, Newark spent \$1,731.25 per pupil. The 1974-75 expenditure level was 17.6 percent above the \$1,471.72 State Average and 5.8 percent above the Essex County Average, \$1,636.28. In comparison, Newark has lost ground in relation to the State and County average current expense budget expenditure levels since the new education law (Chapter 2120 has been in force. In 1977-78, Newark's total expenditures per pupil were among the lowest in Essex County.

Actually, the expenditure disparities are even more striking than the statistics cited above suggest. If revenues, particularly monies for special needs students, are deducted from the current expense budget and net operating budget per pupil is used as a measure, the gap between 1977-78 State, Essex County, and Newark expenditure levels widens.²⁵

Thus, in some instances state-local financial policy in education has explicitly undermined the expressed intent of the U.S. Congress to afford priority of concern to the disadvantaged, the handicapped, and the bilingual child. Notwithstanding the fact that the tax structure

of the federal government is more progressive and more productive of revenue than our state-local tax systems, so far the federal government has been unwilling to put sufficient dollars behind its educational priorities to overcome the perverse distortion that state-local financial systems create for the children of our central cities.

One ray of hope in the school finance reform movement can be found in two of the most recent court cases, the first in Ohio and the second in New York. (Both are under appeal at the present time; final rulings should be handed down within the next one to two years). In Board of Education of the City District of the City of Cincinnati et al v. Franklin B. Walker, Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Court of Common Pleas, Hamilton County, Ohio, stated on December 5, 1977: "It is thus clear that the present (school aid) formula (in Ohio) makes the quality of a child's education a function not only of the property wealth of his school district, but also of the income wealth of his district and the willingness of the residents of his district to tax themselves for his educational benefit.... A school finance system which creates large disparities in educational opportunity by allowing or causing the quality of education throughout the state to depend upon three educationally irrelevant factors—property wealth, income wealth and voter willingness—violates the basic concepts of equal protection of the laws." In protecting the educational interests of the child, this statement goes far beyond the doctrine of Serrano, in which the only "irrelevant factor" the court was able to recognize was taxable property wealth in the local district.

The New York Case is Levittown v. Nyquist, with the cities of New York, Rochester, Buffalo, and Syracuse as plaintiffs-intervenors. It

is remarkable in that it is the first major school finance case (dated June 23, 1978) in which the court accepted the doctrine of municipal overburden, i.e., the contention that large cities are handicapped in providing public money for public schools by the fact that they are required to spend large amounts of money per capita for non-school local services, such as fire and police protection, health, and welfare, and to sustain local tax rates for nonschool services in excess of the state average. If either or both of these cases had preceded Serrano, the school finance reform movement could not have ignored the plight of central city schools to the extent that it did.

But the situation may get even worse. California pioneered school finance reform, and, as a follow-up, may well vote in 1980 to give the nation its first statewide school voucher system.²⁶ Many members of the middle class now appear eager to return to the central city. For some, it is simply the fact that they find suburban life boring; for others, given increases in house values and energy costs, living in the suburbs has become too expensive. Call it gentrification if you like it and displacement if you don't, the return flow of the middle class to central cities is not accompanied by a reinvestment in central city schools.²⁷ This poses a substantial cost for the returnees in the purchase of private school educations. Vouchers will take care of that problem very handily, and the floodgates will be open. But where, then, are the poor to live? This is an additional reason to be concerned about these wonderful innovations in public policy that are starting to flow in California.

It should not be concluded from all of the above that disinvestment in central city schools has destroyed the intellectual base of those

schools, not completely. When the author served as Staff Director of the New York State Commission on Education in the early 70s, we could see very clearly that the distribution of achievement in New York City was strongly bimodal: There were many high achieving students and many low, alas, but few in the middle.²⁸ It might be said that New York had the largest concentration of high achieving students of any school district in the country. The same is probably true today. Furthermore, recent studies with which we have been involved in Oakland show precisely that children of low income parents do well in school and many children of high income parents don't do so well. Nearly a third of children from homes with incomes below \$10,000 score at or above grade level in California standard tests.²⁹ In our thinking about big city schools, we have been drawn too much to the occasional act of violence, too much to the high school graduate who apparently cannot read very well, and far too little to those high achieving students who are carrying on their studies successfully in spite of the obstacles that the deteriorated urban environment places before them.

I also think much of the public discussion of the plight of central city schools has cast blame on the allegedly feckless behavior of low-income parents, the archetypical welfare mother being a primary case in point. Our data from Oakland indicate that many low-income parents appear to exert much greater efforts in behalf of their children than do middle-class parents.

A final note on the public sector in the cities--one of the other effects of the tax revolt is to cause urban public institutions of higher education to raise fees for tuition. Thus, the route to jobs through

their eagerness to learn. Student disinterest in learning probably represents the single most significant form of disinvestment in central city education.

We said earlier that central cities can be described as storage bins for people who have no role to play as individuals in our market economy. Youth in their teens, and especially minority youth, are excluded from that market economy. Nationally, the unemployment rate for black teenagers in 1976 was 47.8 percent.³⁰ This is 8.1 times the total unemployment rate for white males. It is over three times as high as the white teenage unemployment rate. Almost certainly unemployment rates for young blacks in central cities were even higher.

Much more important is the following observation: In 1976 the percentage of black high school graduates who were employed in occupations which required less than a high school degree was 67.2 percent.³¹

As a group, one might say that these young people have a function in the market economy—their presence serves to depress wages and increase profits for firms in the secondary labor market. Some might hold that the prospect of unemployment is a goad or spur toward studying hard in high school. If this is so, then one might suggest that fear of youth unemployment be redistributed toward the benefit of suburban youth. Surely we would not want to see suburban youth lack incentive to work hard in school. More probably, unemployment and dim prospects for work advancement are great discouragements for high school age youth in central cities. Hard study is an act of investment, but if the returns on investment are so risky and uncertain, how can one call forth the effort? Disinvestment in central city schools occurs as

the process of acquiring advanced certificates is being closed. For central city youth, public policy in higher education cannot logically be separated from public policy toward the schools. The federal government's financial stake in higher education has long been much larger, relatively speaking, than in K-12 schooling. There already exists, therefore, a basis for congressional intervention in tuition and financial policies of colleges and universities. The policy objective should be to focus that interest on institutions in large metropolitan areas. Otherwise, as the headline in the Wall Street Journal, July 26, 1978, stated: "California Property Tax Cut Jeopardizes Universal Access to College."

Disinvestment by Students

Education is a process through which students acquire knowledge and through which they develop their interests and skills. Beyond a certain point in education, and that point is very much an individual matter, the teacher, conducting class in a formal manner, becomes irrelevant—students start to learn on their own. The latter point is stated to gain some perspective on the relative significance of the roles of students and teachers. In the early stages of education, the teacher's role is important, but in all stages of education the student's role is highly significant. Educational policy in the United States, at least since World War II, has emphasized "bought resources": students will learn more if teachers are better paid, if there are more books placed in the schools, etc. Policy has not been directed to improving the performance of students in their own right: that is, it has not dealt in any thorough manner with motivations of students,

students find themselves unable to summon forth the energy for studies in the face of such dismal employment prospects. This is an act of disinvestment for which additional purchased resources cannot compensate; that is, reducing class size a bit may have its effect cancelled by student disinterest, which in turn is related to poor prospects for being able to use one's education in the labor market. The creation of knowledge and abilities by students is a joint activity of student and teacher. Students can invest in education by studying hard in school and out, or students can effectively disinvest in education by giving most of their attention to frivolous activity—today's pleasure. Lack of jobs encourages the latter behavior.³² Thus, the intent of the U.S. Congress to give priority of concern to school programs for low-income youth is cancelled by the failures in national employment policies. For central city youth, jobs policy and educational policy cannot be logically separated.

Is there evidence to support the assertion that lack of jobs and low quality of jobs in central cities are associated with student alienation and disinterest in learning? Substantively, yes. A national sample of high school graduates who had gone to work after high school (not college) and a companion sample of high school dropouts were asked if what they learned in high school helped them to do a better job. Only 13 percent of the dropouts answered "very true": more startling, only 16 percent of the graduates said "very true." The same two groups of young people were asked if anyone in high school had helped them get to their present jobs. Eighty-four percent of the dropouts said "no" and so did 81 percent of the graduates.³⁰ This was a national sample; quite possibly the negative attitudes revealed about the contribution

of high school to success in work would have been more extreme if the sample had been confined to inner city youth. (We are not talking about the contributions of high school to successful careers for persons who use high school as a stepping stone to college.)

A study has been made of the "development of work attitudes." One objective was to measure the desire for challenge and responsibility in work. The summary conclusion is as follows:

... Desire for Job Challenge ... measures the need to have a job that is challenging in the sense of providing opportunities to learn new things, utilize present skills, and take responsibility. Throughout high school these job characteristics are rated very important by those who later attend colleges and universities. Other post-high school groupings, such as workers and those who enter military service, rate job characteristics only moderately important at the beginning of tenth grade. But by twelfth, they rate them almost as important as their college-bound classmates. Perhaps this orientation to work is one of the traits which help the college-bound do the work necessary to gain admission to college.

... for those who were unemployed a year after high school,... interest in Job Challenge climbed rapidly between tenth and eleventh grade, dropped slightly in twelfth, then plummeted as they failed in the job market. It is as though the attitude facilitates the transition from high school to a post-high school activity, but it is discarded if the transition fails."³⁴

These finds challenge the idea that inner city high school students are too lazy to want a position of responsibility, but they also indicate that positive attitudes toward work do not easily survive an

introduction to the world of work that is unemployment. Quite possibly, desire for challenge is ground down when one's first several jobs are of low quality, i.e., make no demands on one's mind and offer no real advancement.

A third study compared attitudes toward school and work with level of student effort:

... The four ethnic groups in San Francisco (Black, Spanish-speaking, Other White, and Oriental) all report similar high social pressure and all relate their schooling to their future jobs—factors determining the importance of school work. However, the black and Spanish-speaking students tended to overestimate their own level of effort. Thus we found two large groups of students who felt that school was important but were in fact putting out less effort in school. They were not telling us that school is unimportant. Quite the contrary. They were telling us that school is important, that their parents do support and care about school, and that they do see a link between school and their occupational futures. While they often believed they were putting out appropriate amounts of effort, their more objective reports about cutting, homework, and day-dreaming, gave contrary evidence.³⁵

Hence, high quality jobs are needed for central city youth, not simply to provide motivation to study, but also to provide the information about standards of performance and effort--in school and in after-school life—that success demands. As long as high quality jobs are beyond one's own experience and also beyond that of one's older siblings and more ambitious friends, a person cannot easily judge whether he or she is putting forth the required level of effort in school to

obtain such a job.

The Rand Corporation Report, Youth Policy in Transition, appears to accept the same general line of argument:

... The quality of many jobs available to young workers is low and may contribute as much as schooling or age segregation to alienation among the young.

... Youth employment is especially sensitive to changes in the quantity of jobs, i.e., to national economic policy.

... In the case of young blacks (as well as other minorities), discrimination, discouragement, and lack of information about or geographical access to jobs create problems above and beyond those of most other youth.³⁶

An Offensive and Defensive Strategy for Central Cities

Central cities should pursue a political strategy that is both defensive and offensive. Let us start with the assumption that the quality of life in central city areas does not represent a crisis of legitimization at this time—i.e., does not constitute a problem sufficiently serious in our national life to justify remedial action--nor is it likely to in the near future. We cannot count on our rulers to care deeply about central city problems. The taxpayers revolt, while possibly exaggerated by our leaders and media, is real. The public is turning aside from the public sector.

What will be done to improve the quality of life in central cities will be done because the resources have been wrested from the ruling elite by political action. Here are our suggestions for some com-

ponents of the defensive strategy:

1. To resist and defeat conscious and subconscious signals from teachers and administrators that minimize the educational potential of central city youth.

2. To resist and defeat the school reform movement in its efforts to drain school resources from central city sources into the suburbs and to redirect that school reform movement toward the needs of low-income students. The new generation of court cases, as in Ohio and New York, point the way, in that they re-establish priority of concern for the needs of school children and explicitly recognize the special fiscal problems of central cities.

3. To resist and defeat the development of private schools through vouchers and, through tuition tax credits, which amount to the same thing.

4. To resist and defeat efforts to deny universal access to higher education (by changing tuition fees and other means) for youth of metropolitan areas.

None of the actions mentioned so far addresses strongly the general problem of disinvestment in central cities. We have tried to indicate that reinvestment in central city schools is insufficient policy action. What we must seek is reinvestment in the economic basis of the central cities, for only then may students find a point to their academic work. School improvement cannot be sustained unless jobs are made available. The trick is to obtain reinvestment by means other than gentrification.

We not only need more jobs in central cities but better jobs, jobs less characterized by hierarchical structure, jobs that have meaning in terms of quality of life, jobs in which content and ends are subject

to worker control. But let's not be too idealistic. Let's just settle for good jobs as defined in the present economic structure. Let's also recognize that the public mood in this country is such that we cannot expect any large number of jobs to be created from public funds. We are in a time of no real growth in the public sector.

Let us consider an offensive strategy. The objective of the offensive strategy is to improve the economic base of the central city and at the same time to show the youth of the central city that they can participate in the mainstream life of America. That demonstration is an essential support for raising the quality of urban education. It is not enough that jobs are available to residents of inner cities. Those jobs must be available to young people. It is not enough that jobs be available to young people of inner cities--those jobs must be high quality.

If government will not finance the rebirth of the central city from tax resources, it can exert pressure on the private economy to aid in that rebirth. As a major element of an offensive strategy for cities, we suggest a national industrial siting policy. For example, let it be enacted that all firms holding assets of more than one billion dollars be required to justify any plant expansion or relocation in terms of the effect on employment in central city areas. That is, the firms would be called upon to file a report similar to an environmental protection report, with the intent that plant locations be in central city areas or along an existing public transit line within an hour's commuting distance from the central city. A location in any other place would require major justifications. We should move the jobs to the people, rather than imagining that we can move the people to the jobs.³⁷

This approach may not be strong enough. There are other ways to encourage central city location of plants. One is to give a corporate tax break to firms that comply with an industrial siting policy favoring inner cities. Another is for governments to assist firms that locate in central cities by seeing to it that they receive preference over other firms in bidding for government orders.³⁸ These approaches have the advantage that they do not require specific allocations of expenditure in governmental budgets. They are hidden subsidies.

No one should contend that subsidies of this kind are—or are likely to be—efficient in promoting national economic growth. But subsidies commonly have justifications other than economic efficiency. The agriculture subsidies in earlier days were justified in terms of maintaining rural virtues. The home-owners subsidies (deduction of mortgage interest and property tax in federal income taxation), which have done so much to finance the exodus of the middle class from central cities to the suburbs, were justified in terms of the homeowners' role in maintaining the social fabric of our nation. Industrial siting subsidies can be justified in terms of simple decency and fairness. For such major economic action to be forthcoming, of course, the beneficiary class must be larger than the class of school children. It is larger, because it would include, practically speaking, all residents of central cities.

The second main component of an offensive strategy is, however, aimed particularly at youth. We suggest a subsidy for youth employment. Firms that hire persons under age twenty-five who are established residents of inner cities would receive cash compensation. If no other funds are available to pay for such a youth subsidy, we suggest the

youth subsidy be confined to central city firms and financed by holding back part of the state income taxes, personal and corporate, that presently drain such large amounts of money from central cities for state-wide uses. This second part of the offensive strategy is intended to assure that younger people are the beneficiaries, though not the exclusive beneficiaries, of the urban industrial siting policy.³⁹

We close with this note. The public is not eager to re-examine social policy toward urban schools. Instead, the public is inclined to blame the students and their families for reputedly low levels of achievement. The public thus insists upon proficiency examinations to extract achievement from students. Otherwise, the public is inclined to blame teachers and administrators for the deficiencies of urban education and to charge them with incompetence and inefficiency. What we need is a recommitment to the ideals of our country and a retreat from easy answers that allows us as a society to absolve ourselves of responsibility for the children of our cities.

ENDNOTES

1. I wish to express my appreciation to E. Gareth Hoachlander, especially for his help in the section of this paper on industrial siting. I have received assistance from the following persons, none of whom is responsible for my errors: Robert Blackburn, Jaqueline Fralley, Christine Harris, Elliott Medrich, Dorothy Merrick, Judith Roizen, Victor Rubin, John Shea, David Stern, Diana Thomason, and Claire Vickery.

2. Daniel R. Fusfeld, "The Economy of the Urban Ghetto," in Financing the Metropolis: Public Policy in Urban Economics, ed. John P. Crecine, (Beverly Hills, California, Sage Publications, 1970), p. 382-84.

3. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, Historical Statistics, Part I, Series A 82-90. (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1975), p. 13.

4. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, Historical Statistics, Part 2, Series N 171-179. (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1975), p. 641

5. Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder (Kerner), (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 257-59.

6. E. Gareth Hoachlander, Housing (Berkeley, California, Childhood and Government Project, Boalt Hall School of Law, unpublished manuscript, 1977), p. 14

7. Joseph A. Pechman, Federal Tax Policy, 3rd ed. (Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution, 1977), Tables 4-7, p. 91.

8. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, Census of Manufacturing, Census of Wholesale Trade, and Census of Retail Trade. (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, for various years as quoted in National Urban Coalition, Indicators of Urban Conditions. (Washington, D.C., The Coalition, 1978), p. 90.

9. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, Current Population Reports, No. 108 (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, p. 60, as quoted in National Urban Coalition, Indicators of Urban Conditions, p. 54.

10. Economic Report of the President and Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1978, Table B-2, p. 258-59. These figures refer to government provision of services and do not include transfers, such as welfare payments, social security, etc., that have swollen the total of public budgets. But these latter items represent symptoms of urban distress, not solutions of it. Central cities, because their public capital is already deteriorated, can stand a long dry spell much less easily than can the typical suburban community.

11. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, City Employment in 1977, (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1978), Table 1, p. 5.

12. Richard T. Silberman, Director of Finance, State of California, "A Study of the Local Government Impacts of Proposition 13, Memeographed, (Sacramento, California; The Department of Finance, 1979), Vol. 1: p. 52-54, and Part I, p. 1.

13. Victor Rubin and Elliott A. Medrich, "After-School Services in a Time of Fiscal Crises," The Urban and Social Change Review, Vol. 12, No. 1. (February 1, 1979), p. 27.

14. Center for Field Studies, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University, Pawtucket, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, The Center, 1957), Ch. VI. Four schools lacked fire escapes altogether and ten had "precipitous fire escapes which are difficult to reach." Thirteen of the schools had wood staircases and open, non-fire resistant stairwell enclosures. See p. 243 of the Report.

15. In McInnis v. Shapiro, the Illinois Court stated, inter alia, "Actually, there is little direct precedent because the contentious presented are novel. But the plaintiffs must resort to the legislature rather than the courts...While the complaining students repeatedly emphasize the importance of pupils' education needs, they do not offer a definition of this nebulous concept." Michael S. Sorgen, Patrick S. Duffy, William A. Kaplin, and Ephraim Margolin, State, School, and Family; Cases and Materials on Law and Education. (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1970).

16. See Arthur E. Wise, Rich Schools, Poor Schools: The Promise of Equal Educational Opportunity (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1967); and John E. Coons, William H. Clune III, and Stephen D. Sugarman, Private Wealth and Public Education (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1970).

17. The report was published as Final Report to the Senate Select Committee on School District Finance (State Senate, Sacramento, California, 1972), and was extensively cited in the study by Robert Reischauer and Robert Hartman, Reforming School Finance. (Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution, 1973).

18. Education Finance Center, Education Commission of the States, School Finance Reform in the States: 1978. (Denver, The Commission, 1978), p. 15.

19. Margaret E. Goertz, Jay H. Moskowitz, and Judy G. Sinkin, Plain Talk About School Finance, (Washington, D.C. National Institute of Education, 1978), p. 14-26.

20. Plain Talk, p. 27.

21. League of Women Voters Education Fund, Campaigning for Fair School Finance, (Washington, D.C., The League, 1978).

22. National Conference of State Legislatures, "Enrollment and Fiscal Trends in Large Cities," (Washington, D.C., The Conference, unpublished, no date). It should be admitted that certain major cities appear to have received benefit from a revision of the state-to-local school finance formulas--Chicago, Boston, and Denver come to mind. However, cities have to spend a lot of money in the education budget for non instructional purposes. In New York City, in spite of handsome increases in per student expenditures, the per student outlays in instructional services actually declined by 16.9 percent between 1974-75 and 1976-77. See Board of Education of the City of New York, Public Education in New York City: Reflections on the Immediate Past and Some Thoughts About the Future--A Budgetary Perspective, (New York City, The Board, 1976), p. 38.

23. Robert Brischetto and David Vaughan, Minorities, the Poor, and School Finance Reform: An Impact Study of Six States. (San Antonio, Texas, Intercultural Development Research Associates, 1979).

24. Ibid, Table 8, p. 99.

25. New Jersey Education Reform Project, "Newark School Finance Profile, (Newark, N.J., Greater Newark Urban Coalition, 1978), p.1.

26. For a discussion of the voucher argument, see John E. Coons and Stephen D. Sugarman, Education of Choice: The Case for Family Control (Berkeley, California, University of California Press, 1978).

27. The process of "gentrification" is described in Blake Fleetwood, "A New Dawning in the Cities," San Francisco Chronicle, (January 17, 1979), p. F-1.

28. The Fleischmann Report on the Quality, Cost, and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education in New York State Vol. 3, (New York, The Viking Press, 1973), p. 142-57.

29. Charles S. Benson, "Household Production of Human Capital: Time Uses of Parents and Children as Inputs," A paper delivered at the National Symposium, Efficiency and Equity in Educational Finance, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, May 3, 1979.

30. United States Commission on Civil Rights, Social Indicators for Minorities and Women, (Washington, D.C., The Commission, 1978), Table 3.2, p. 32.

31. Ibid, Table 2.5, p. 18.

32. As the Robbins Report noted: "Confucius said in the Analects that it was not easy to find a man who had studied for three years without aiming at pay." (Committee on Higher Education (Robbins), Higher Education, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1963), p. 6.

33. Jerald G. Bachman, Swayzer Green, and Ilona D. Wistanen, Youth in Transition: Dropping Out--Problem or Symptom?, Vol. 3 of series, (Ann Arbor, Michigan, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 1971), Table 8-4, p. 149.

34. Jerome Johnston and Jerald Bachman, Transition from High School to Work: The Work Attitudes and Early Occupational Experience of Young Men, (Ann Arbor, Michigan, Institute of Social Research, University of Michigan, 1973), p. 40. The sample consisted of randomly chosen males of the high school class of 1969.

35. Sanford M. Dornbusch, "To Try or Not to Try," The Stanford Magazine, Vol. 2, No. 2, (Fall/Winter, 1974), p. 53.

36. Michael Timpane, Susan Abramowitz, Sue Berryman Borrow, and Anthony Pascal, Youth Policy in Transition, (Santa Monica, California, The Rand Corporation, 1976), p. 145. At Berkeley, a study team led by Professor David Stern has just completed interviews with a stratified random sample of high school juniors and seniors. The interviews included questions on working for pay, possibilities for training on the job and job advancement, how jobs are obtained, etc. This investigation is performed under N.I.E. contract #400-77-0077, "Effects of the California High School Proficiency Examination," and results should be available in the late summer of 1979.

37. Wisconsin now has legislation requiring a sixty day notice for relocations of plants. In Ohio, the 1977-78 General Assembly considered a much more comprehensive act that would have required two years of advance notice and compensation to communities for the social costs of relocation. It did not pass, but the bill may be reintroduced in the current (1978-79) session. See Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies, New Directions in State and Local Public Policy. (Washington, D.C., The Conference, 1977), p. 79-84.

38. France and the United Kingdom have industrial siting policies. For a discussion of them, see Stuart Holland, Capital Versus the Regions, (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1976), Ch. 8. For treatment of industrial siting in terms of economic efficiency and equity, see also Harry W. Richardson, Regional and Urban Economics, (New York, Penguin Books, 1978), Ch. 9 and 10.

39. It is interesting to note that Lockheed Aircraft Corporation builds parts for one of our most technologically-advanced airliners in Watts. The plant was established in 1969. Approximately one quarter of its workers are below the age of 25. Almost all of the workers are residents of Watts when they are hired. Telephone interview with Karl Geddes, production manager, February 16, 1979.

FINANCING PUBLIC EDUCATION: THE THREAT OF DISINVESTMENT

Alvin H. Townsel and Edwin Hamilton

Financing Public Education:

The Threat of Disinvestment

Investment refers to the commitment of resources (time, money, effort, and so on) with the expectation of some subsequent gain. Disinvestment represents a withdrawal of those resources to shift them to other areas expected to yield greater or more immediate satisfaction. Universal public schooling in America traditionally was endorsed on the basis of an underlying hypothesis that such an investment creates human capital and, therefore, helps the country to grow. It was assumed that certain economic and social returns from education would be reflected in such areas as the level and structure of earnings, and would result in both private and social gains.

Numerous policy considerations are related to this investment theory. The one I will discuss here is a relatively recent one which has not been adequately treated in the literature: How the allocation of the investment in education affects selected groups and individuals, resulting in the equalization or disequalization of educational resources. This consideration is relevant to the seeming paradox of the American dream that the education of any child should not depend on the social or economic status of his or her parents and the recent decisions at all levels regarding the allocation of scarce resources between education and the rest of the economy. Within the educational sector itself, this consideration is relevant to decisions setting priorities among programs and localities which have varying impact on income and ethnic groups.

Currently, it appears that educational investment decisions are antithetical to education need. If equity in educational opportunity, however defined, is to be achieved, policy-makers must take into account the differences in children, in their needs, and in the educational experiences to which they are exposed. Although the argument of educational need was rejected by federal and state courts and scholars of economics, Walter Hines Page made a convincing argument for such attention in an address delivered at the State Normal and Industrial School for Women at Greensboro, North Carolina in June, 1897. Page was not a professional educator. He was a scholar, journalist, publisher, and ambassador; his primary interest was education. He stated his creed as follows:

I believe that by the right training of men we add to the wealth of the world. All wealth is the creation of man, and he creates it only in proportion to the trained uses of the community; and, the more men we train, the more wealth everyone may create.

In 1961 a University of Chicago economist, Theodore Schultz, again presented convincing evidence that education was an investment in people.¹ The early American idea of education as a luxury for the rich, or the privilege of the well-born, has, however, left its imprint. Roe L. Johns, renowned school finance scholar and consultant for the past fifty years, has found that "a variation of that concept still existed in some states not only in the South, but in other regions." He reported: "Some school superintendents of wealthy school districts felt that children who resided in wealthy school districts should have better educational opportunities than children in districts with little wealth. Their views and the views of state legislators from wealthy school districts are reflected today in some state school finance plans where education is largely a function of per pupil wealth."²

Investment Allocation Decisions:
An Historical Perspective

An allocation represents the rationing of scarce resources.

The school finance allocation plan or formula, therefore, reflects the relative value placed on various educational programs or populations of children to be served. Policy choices related to the investment in education are intricately associated with the form and amount of human capital desired. That is to say, man's capabilities have been produced and can be enhanced by means of investment, or diminished by means of disinvestment.³

Decisions which regulate the allocation of educational resources may also fix the degree to which human potential is realized.

Ironically, the human capital orientation was highly regarded during the slavery period in this nation. Slaves were legally sanctioned property and the function of education related to this capital was not ignored. It was not an uncommon practice for slave masters to increase the economic efficiency of their labor supply, observing that slaves could be more useful if they acquainted themselves with the language and customs of the colonies rather than following their African customs and speech. This practice continued until 1830-1835 when stringent laws were passed by state legislatures limiting the education of blacks because of slave uprisings by Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner. Generally, this form of disinvestment in the education of blacks continued until the Civil War when the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction provided that states must include provisions to educate freedmen in order to be restored to the Union.

States responded in a number of ways. In 1865, the Florida legislature enacted legislation which imposed a special tax of one dollar on all male blacks to be paid into the treasury for the establishment and maintenance of schools for blacks. The superintendent of schools was authorized to collect tuition fees from each pupil to be deposited in the freemen's school fund.⁴ The response in Texas was similar to the Florida plan. In its Constitutional Convention of 1866, Texas lawmakers provided that income derived from the State School Fund be exclusively employed for the education of white children and that all money raised from blacks by special tax be used to establish and maintain schools "for the Africans and their children."⁵

Other states make like provisions for the education of blacks or, in some instances, none at all. Mississippi made no provision until 1870, when its legislature, controlled by blacks and Republicans, established its school system. That system had numerous revenue problems, since many whites violently opposed supporting the education of Blacks.⁶ Alabama, the "Cradle of the Confederacy," established its system of public education in 1868 with great fiscal difficulty due to the bitter opposition of white citizens and their failure to pay taxes.⁷ In Virginia, a coalition of more affluent citizens was formed to oppose taxation for the education of blacks, the result was the financial insolvency of schools in that state. Reports from Prince Edward County in 1871, for example, indicate that "every colored school (was) crowded and growing in enrollment all the time."⁸ Kentucky levied a tax of two mills on real property for school support, plus a fifty-cent poll tax on black males with children of school age. A provision of that levy was that black schools should receive only the taxes paid by blacks, although taxes collected from blacks were used for the support of white schools.

Such patterns of tax resistance related to education were common throughout the South, as citizens followed the lead of Jefferson Davis, who declared his opposition to the use of tax money to "put black and white children on the same level."⁹ Southerners feared the education of poor people, black or white. For this reason no state in the South had developed a system of free public education prior to the Civil War. Such schools as existed were private, largely attended by children of the wealthy. In the Reconstruction period following the war, public education made very slow progress. As to black education, Jefferson Davis declared: "Colored people had already been educated by means of 1) regular and systematic work, 2) language, and 3) the religion of a civilized country."¹⁰

There is little evidence of inequitable tax practices outside the South during this era, although there were some. There were numerous instances of segregated school facilities having existed in the past, indicating that educational offerings were disparate. The Massachusetts legislature, for example, establishing the first public schools for the poor, ignored a petition from black parents seeking schools for their children.¹¹ Generally, in the New England states, school committees assigned black children to separate facilities without regard to the district in which they resided. Pennsylvania and Ohio, although extending public school privileges to all children, required district school directors to establish separate facilities for black students whenever twenty or more could be accommodated. In New York, the legislature authorized any school district, upon the approval of a town's school commission, to provide for segregation. The newer states frequently

excluded blacks from all public education, but by 1850 most states had mandated separate facilities. In Ohio, a legislative committee rejected a petition to grant blacks a share of the Education Fund, and a California mayor vetoed appropriations for black schools. The schools of Washington, D.C. were segregated largely because some southern congressmen such as Jefferson Davis denounced congressional efforts to provide for the education of blacks. They claimed that integrated schools would conflict with the established policy of the southern and many northern states.

President Lincoln was keenly aware of his responsibilities towards blacks, and exercised effective leadership in their behalf. As a member of the House of Representatives, he had declared on January 10, 1849, that blacks should be apprenticed and educated in the District of Columbia. He later expressed his concern for the provision of education for blacks to General Nathaniel Banks in Louisiana. On June 25, 1864, he signed a bill providing schools for blacks in the District of Columbia.

On July 16, 1865, Congress authorized the activities of the Freedmen's Bureau, which was to function for nine years. After that date, major responsibility for education shifted to the states. The mood of the country may be indicated by recalling the 1876 compromise when Rutherford B. Hayes, a Republican, won the presidency by promising Democrats he would withdraw federal troops from the South, thus assuring disenfranchisement of blacks.¹²

In 1883, the Supreme Court declared that the Fourteenth Amendment protected the rights of blacks from infringement by states but not by individuals, thus narrowing the range of freedom. It further ruled in 1896 in Plessy v. Ferguson that an act requiring that black and white persons be provided separate railway accommodations did not violate those rights. This decision set the legal framework for a caste system in this

nation. Although the issue of public education was not presented to the Court, by using the schools as an example in its ruling the mood of the Court was crystal clear.

Separate But Equal Investments

One might question the investment of a like amount of resources in separate securities unless some benefits are expected to result. Such investment practices, it appears on the surface, would not produce gains. By 1923, it became clear that public education was to be separate for certain, but highly unequal. The average per pupil expenditure differences for white and black children during the period from 1900 to 1923 were enormous.¹³ Not only was this true, inequities existed in wages and salaries paid to teachers. Of eleven southern states reporting teacher salary expenditures by race in 1909, \$23.8 million was paid to teachers. This represented 74.4 percent of all public school expenditures for that year. Black teachers were paid \$3.8 million or 13 percent of the total expenditure for teachers' salaries although they instructed 40 percent of the total enrollment.¹⁴ Table 3 in Jones shows the average monthly salary for white and black teachers in selected southern states.¹⁵ In both, 1909-10 and 1928-29, inequities existed in the amounts paid. In all instances, black teachers received lower salaries for their services.

The physical facilities provided for the education of black children represented another source of inequity. According to Monroe:

The average white child at this time was studying in an educational structure whose per capita investment value was \$29.84. This was more than four times the \$7.34 per capita value representative of the Negro schools.

The investment value of white and Negro schools reached \$812.8 million and \$77.3 million respectively in 1930, but the Negro school proportional share remained constant.¹⁶

Variations in the average length of school terms also were significant at that time. In 1926-27, for example, the average length of school term for whites in Florida was eight months, and for blacks approximately six months. At the county level, these variations were even more severe. They ranged from 180 days in Monroe County to 96 days in Hardee County for white students, and for black students, from 180 days in Monroe County to 47 days in Gilchrist County. Historical analysis reveal that similar situations existed throughout the country.

Such differences in expenditures existed as recently as 1952. Table 1 is a profile of per pupil expenditures for nine states from 1939 to 1952. In no case during that period was the average expenditure per black child equal to or greater than that for a white child.

School Finance Response to the Separate But Equal Investment Decision

School finance equalization formulas are procedures which reflect decisions made relative to the investment of school funds. Once enacted, they guide the implementation of policy decisions. In recent years the foundation program approach to school aid distribution has been, by far, the concept most commonly used to determine school finance formulas. The original concepts of the foundation program were developed by George D. Strayer, Robert M. Haig, and Paul Mort, from 1921 to 1923.

Conceptually, the foundation program approach did not recognize the need to equalize educational opportunity between white and black students. By assuming a lower level of fiscal support for black than for white children, this approach only reinforced the separate but unequal investments.

TABLE 1

Expenditure per Pupil in Average Daily Attendance for Instruction
in White and Negro Public Schools of Southern States

State	1939-40		1949-50		1951-52	
	White	Negro	White	Negro	White	Negro
Alabama	\$34.25	\$12.20	\$ 87.55	\$ 69.28	\$107.64	\$ 92.45
Arkansas	23.93	11.17	75.88	47.21	80.15	54.21
Florida	51.96	23.09	142.79	111.24	156.04	131.79
Georgia	40.50	13.92	93.42	61.31	124.08	99.49
Louisiana	51.78	14.93	141.89	86.92	151.46	99.82
Mississippi	31.33	6.64	78.71	23.84	88.97	32.68
North Carolina	34.63	23.60	103.18	95.29	113.72	105.81
South Carolina	42.00	13.81	92.40	58.54	120.17	81.04
Texas	53.09	29.36	153.59	115.35	167.54	119.92
Total (Average)	41.99	16.29	115.68	72.70	132.38	90.20

SOURCE: Pierce, Carmichael, Moore, and Drewry, White and Negro Schools in the South. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1955), p. 165.

The cost of the minimum program was computed on the basis of average practice in a state and the required local effort was set at such a level that the wealthiest district received no state foundation aid. In decreasing proportion, each school district received aid from the state, theoretically thus adjusting for variations in wealth. In applying this concept the recommendation of a report prepared in 1929 by staff members of Teachers College, Columbia University, to Florida school officials is illustrative.

Those recommended included the following: "A high school teaching unit costs more than an elementary teaching unit and according to average practice, a teaching unit in schools for white children costs more than a teaching unit in schools for colored children." Based on this recommendation, the Florida school finance plan provided:

1. 1.43 times as much for a high school unit as an elementary unit.
2. .54 of the allotment per elementary unit for white children as an elementary teaching unit for colored children.
3. .84 of the allotment for a white secondary teaching unit for colored children.¹⁷

The implementation of foundations programs under Strayer, Haig and Mort's formula resulted in the following conditions for black children in the South in 1939-40:

1. The average expenditure per white pupil enrolled was \$49.35 and per Negro Pupil, \$19.31.
2. Nine of the southern states had shorter terms for blacks than for whites.

3. Almost 60 percent of the white teachers had four years or more of college training and 7.2 percent less than two. In black schools, 32.6 percent of the teachers had four years or more of college training and 29.6 less than two years.
4. The average salary of white teachers including principals was \$1,011, and of black teachers, \$560.¹⁸

Such statistics clearly indicate, despite the United States Supreme Court decision in Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896, that segregation with equal provision of services was legal, the state foundation programs in the South two generations later did not provide for the equal funding of education for white and black pupils. They were not designed to achieve that goal.

The intent of the designers of the foundation program approach was clearly established at an American Association of School Administrators annual meeting held in New Orleans in 1938. A sectional program on school finance was held and Roe L. Johns, Paul Mort, and Edgar Morphet appeared on that program. Both Johns and Morphet had been students of Mort. Morphet and Johns presented ideas on equalizing educational opportunity by a foundation program plan which differed somewhat from the Mort formula. They particularly opposed computing a foundation program on the basis of average practice and excluding wealthier districts entirely from participation in state funds. They argued that average practice was disqualifying in states with segregated school systems which discrimination between the races, between elementary and high schools, and between men and women. Mort became angry at them, calling them "young Fascists."¹⁹

The provision of theoretically separate and equal public education, which was the law of the land and to which all children were entitled, was never implemented through policy decisions at the state level. School finance formulas during that era represented a lag, or at best, an accommodation to the racist system that existed. Some clear-thinking scholars, like Johns and Morphet, were interested in reforming this system, and continued to push for equalization in school finance.

Back-to-Basic Investment Decision

The Declaration of Independence and all other documents of American government up to 1954 had provided for basic rights to which all citizens were entitled. These basic principles were universally articulated and throughout the world, the inscription engraved upon the Statue of Liberty interpreted the beacon light:

Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses longing to breathe free...

As early as 1791 Thomas Jefferson had assured blacks, that in writing the Declaration of Independence, he had in mind the rights of blacks as well as whites, and declared that blacks had a national right to education and freedom. Therefore, the Supreme Court's ruling, in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka may be perceived as a move "back to basics."

Disparities had remained in expenditure patterns for whites and blacks up to 1954: Estimated figures for the thirteen southern states revealed public school expenditures for whites ranging from \$102.72 in Arkansas to a high of \$195.01 in Florida, with an average expenditure of \$164.88 per pupil. For blacks, expenditures per pupil ranged from \$35.27 in Mississippi to \$153.24 in Florida, with an average expenditure per pupil for the region of \$115.08. At that time, expenditures for capital

outlay ranged from \$5.48 for white pupils in Arkansas to \$74.03 in Florida, with an average capital outlay expenditure for the region of \$36.25. These expenditures for black pupils ranged from \$3.24 in Arkansas to \$79.18 in Florida with a regional average capital outlay expenditure for blacks of \$29.58.²⁰

The 1954 Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education recognized the inherently unequal nature of "separate but unequal" systems of education. The evidence presented in that case was sufficient to demonstrate that fewer dollars and less adequate educational services were provided to black children in segregated schools than to white children in the same school district. Elimination of racial discrimination in the provision of educational services to children was one of the major purposed of Court-ordered desegregation. It was hoped that black children would gain equal access to financial resources devoted to education.²¹

For many years, school segregation referred to by the Supreme Court in Brown was widely thought to be a problem limited to the seventeen states which had segregation laws in 1954. Even in those states, Brown had little effect. At the beginning of 1957, "separate and unequal" elementary and secondary schools were wholly intact in eight southern states.²² Four states - Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and South Carolina - had abolished state constitutional provisions that required the maintenance of the public school system, and two of them had authorized state-funded tuition grants to enable children to attend private schools if public schools were closed. Additionally, pupil assignment laws were enacted which gave the appearance of desegregated placement where none existed, and later, "interposition" statutes were passed which declared the decision in Brown of no avail. Between 1955 and 1957, a minimum of 120 state statutes were passed in an effort to nullify the Supreme Court's desegregation ruling. Six years later, in the 1963-64 school year, only one percent of the South's black pupils were enrolled in desegregated schools.²³

At the time of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, school boards in northern and western cities usually refused to provide information on the ethnic composition of their schools. They claimed that they had never discriminated and that it would be an affront to children to count them racially. With enforcement of the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the problem of resistance to desegregation in public schools became a national problem, not one confined to the South. White flight from large urban centers left many school districts in northern and western cities largely minority. Because some businesses and middle-income blacks also fled the urban centers, the property tax bases upon which public education had placed greatest reliance for fiscal support were threatened. Compounding the already complex problem of fiscal and political support for public education was yet another problem, the private schools and academies which mushroomed in both the North and South during this period. The number of students they enrolled increased from 2.6 million in 1964 to 4.2 million in 1975.²⁴

Speaking to the 7,000 delegates attending the NEA Convention in San Francisco in July 1970, NEA President George Fisher asserted that the Nixon administration "had declared war on public education." He said that some contemporary "experts are predicting that public education cannot survive the onslaughts leveled against it in 1970."

In a remarkably detailed public statement on school desegregation on March 24, 1970, President Nixon made an attack on courts which had sought to end segregation in public education. He branded these urban court orders "extreme" and contended they "have raised widespread fears that the nation might face a massive disruption of public education; that wholesale compulsory busing may be ordered and the neighborhood school virtually doomed."²⁵ Nixon further stated that the emphasis

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should shift "from integration to education," and that the primary decisions related to desegregation should be left to local school systems. In this same policy statement, Mr. Nixon called for setting up a substantial grant program to help desegregating school systems. He proposed a two-year emergency program which would channel \$1.5 billion into desegregating school districts. Due to the manner in which the bill was drafted, almost two-thirds of the available funds were concentrated in the southern states. His proposal would prohibit the use of the new aid "to establish or maintain the transportation of students to overcome racial imbalance."²⁶ Congress rapidly approved an interim appropriation of \$75 million for support of this measure through already existing programs, nine-tenths of which was quickly granted to southern school districts, many of which made no pretense of efforts to desegregate.²⁷

School Finance Responses to "Brown"

The decision of the Supreme Court in Brown stated, "in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate' educational facilities are inherently unequal."²⁸ This meant, as defined here, equal access to resources. This decision called attention to the fact that fiscal disparities existed not only among black and white schools in the South but among schools within districts, among districts within a state, and among states. These inequities frequently had been concealed within a blanket of jargon understandable only to a small band of school administrators and school finance experts. Also, school finance formulas had been designed to achieve the redistribution of fiscal resources from wealthy urban centers of the 1920's to impoverished rural school systems.

By 1954, these school finance schemes had been gradually outmoded by demographic trends that redistributed both population and economic activity, but they remained intact in virtually all of the states.²⁹

Scholars, in the 1960s, including Charles Benson at the University of California, H. Thomas James at Stanford; Arthur Wise, then a graduate student in education at the University of Chicago; and Stephen K. Bailey, Jesse Burkhead, Alan K. Campbell, and Seymour Sacks at Syracuse University, examined the impact of state-aid formulas and local fiscal provisions and uncovered significant defects. Equalization formulas were so diluted and the proportion of state funding so low that property valuation surfaced as the primary determinant of spending levels for elementary and secondary schools, despite the fact that most educational aid was nominally classified as equalizing. Foundation programs had been designed to provide a basic floor to educational spending. The levels at which these programs were set, however, had failed to adjust to evolving expenditure levels and resource needs. Of greater significance, measures of fiscal capacity which determined how much a locality might equitably contribute from local resources were rudimentary. They relied on property value per pupil, a procedure which does not adjust for the far heavier demands for governmental services imposed on urban tax bases than on suburban or rural resources. No consideration had been given to the productivity of different types of property, or to the fact that different types of pupils require different resources for effective learning. It was commonly observed that school districts with low property wealth were taxing themselves at high rates but realizing low revenues, while rich school districts realized higher levels of school revenues from lower tax rates.

Arthur Wise, at the University of Chicago in 1965, described a theory under which inequities in educational funding might be unconstitutional. He argued that the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, as construed in the relevant case law, could be interpreted to require that the quality of education within a state may not vary with geography or wealth.³⁰ Wise's theory was elaborated, tested, and refined by a number of scholars, attorneys, and organizations.

Courts also deliberated the concept of educational need. Several pertinent cases challenging school finance legislation which did not take into account the educational needs of children have been litigated. A 1968 case, McInnis v. Shapiro³¹, petitioned the Federal District Court to declare unconstitutional Illinois legislation which permitted the distribution of school funds not based on these needs. The complaint was dismissed for failure of the plaintiff to state a cause of action and for "non-judiciability," (the court considered "educational need" too nebulous a concept). The lower court's decision was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in McInnis v. Ogilvie.³² In 1969, Virginia's system of public school finance was challenged on similar grounds in Burris v. Wilkerson.³³ The federal district court dismissed the complaint. It then became clear that the educational needs argument by plaintiffs would not be acceptable.

Another school finance position, developed by John E. Coons, William Clune, and Stephen Sugarman, was successfully litigated in the California case, Serrano v. Priest.³⁴ The plaintiffs in this case claimed that California's method of financing public education was unconstitutional due to discrimination on the basis of wealth. The court was asked to strike down finance systems that permitted local variations in wealth to determine spending levels of school districts within a state. The California State

Supreme Court concluded that the level of spending for a child's publicly financed education could not be a function of the wealth of the school district in which he or she happened to reside.

The decision in Serrano may aptly be characterized as a compromise position because it departed from the assertion that the Equal Protection Clause required that state to distribute educational resources in proportion to educational need. Instead, the only mandate requested of the courts was that the state provide education in a manner that was fiscally neutral, that is, in a manner that did not make it easier for wealthy communities to provide better education than districts less amply endowed with taxable resources. Underlying the two different approaches was a philosophical underpinning. The education opportunity approach was more obviously egalitarian, concerned primarily that school resources be distributed in a manner that insured, as a minimum, equal treatment and, at best a compensatory approach designed to employ public resources to overcome learning disadvantages of social and economic origin. The fiscal neutrality approach, on the other hand, emphasized the principal of subsidiarity, the right of individual units to select different levels of educational offerings on the basis of choice unimpeded by differences in wealth. Where Wise was primarily concerned with the achievement of equality (however defined), in educational offerings Coons, Clune and Sugarman were primarily interested in providing tax-rate equality.³⁵

Moreover, Coons and his colleagues chose not to address disparities which are based on racial background. In their Private Wealth and Public Education, these authors state:

There is an understandable tendency to treat the school finance issue as an outrider of the racial problems of public education... The fact is otherwise. There is no reason to suppose that the system of district-based school finance embodies a racial

The districts which contain the great masses of black children ordinarily also contain great masses of white children. There well may be very significant racial/dollar discrimination within districts, but that is another problem; to lump it with interdistrict discrimination is totally misleading.³⁶

The topic of racially based fiscal disparities was, however, addressed by other researchers. For example, in 1972, Robert J. Goetel and Joel S. Berke in their Financing Public Education in South Carolina: Problems and Prospects reported that "data on income, race and school revenues yielded one very clear conclusion: Poor people and nonwhites must pay more to receive less from the system."³⁷ Christopher Jencks also found ethnic-based fiscal disparities. He concluded:

Black children are more likely to live in poorly financed school districts than white children... Our best guess is that American spends about 15-20 percent more per year on the average white child than on the average black school child.³⁸

Federal Compromise of the Investment Decision

All was not lost in the "fiscal neutrality" compromise. The courts continued to accord recognition to the contributions made by education and have repeatedly expressed its importance in "legal lexicon":

We, therefore, begin by examining the indispensable role which education plays in the modern industrial state. This role, we believe, has two significant aspects: First, education is a major determinant of an individual's chances for economic and social success in our competitive society; second, education is a unique influence on a child's development as a citizen and his participation in political and community life... The need for an educated populace assumes greater importance as the problems of our diverse society become increasingly complex.

The United States Supreme Court has repeatedly recognized the role of public education as a unifying social force and the basic tool for shaping democratic values.³⁹

Litigation based on Serrano was followed by roughly comparable decisions in Minnesota, Texas, Kansas, Arizona, New Jersey, and Michigan in little more than a year. Of utmost importance was the Texas case, San Antonio v. Rodriguez,⁴⁰ which resulted in the striking down by the state court of the Texas system of school funding as a denial of equal protection of the laws, and in due course was appealed by the State of Texas. The United States Supreme Court in this landmark decision concerning "state responsibility" and "uniformity of opportunity," refused to declare Texas law unconstitutional, stating:

The consideration and initiation of fundamental reforms with respect to state taxation and education are matters reserved for the legislative processes of the various states, and we do no violence to the values of federalism and separation of powers by staying our hand... The need is apparent for reform in tax systems which may well have tax. And, certainly, innovative new thinking as to public, its methods and its funding, is necessary to assure both a higher level of quality and greater uniformity of opportunity.⁴¹

In Rodriguez, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that, under federal law, education is not a fundamental right. That investment decision was not unanimous. Justice Marshall authored a lengthy dissent which dissected each argument advanced by the majority. His dissent began:

In my judgment, the right of every American to an equal start in life, so far as the provision of a state service as important as education is concerned, is far too vital to permit state discrimination on grounds as tenuous as those presented by this record.

Nor can I accept the notion that it is sufficient to remit these appellees to the vagaries of the political process which, contrary to the majority's suggestion, has proven singularly unsuited to the task of providing a remedy for this discrimination.

I, for one, am unsatisfied with the hope of an ultimate 'political' solution some time in the indefinite future while, in the meantime, countless children unjustifiably receive inferior education that "may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone."

State courts in Michigan and Arizona rules similiary to Rodriguez in claiming that a constitutional right to education within those states is not abridged so long as there is no absolute denial. On the other hand, state courts in Minnesota, Connecticut, California and New Jersey indicated that a child's education should not be a function of the wealth of the school district in which he lives. Generally, however, court decisions, legislative statutes, and state departments of education policy concerned with matters of educational finance have resulted in disinvestment for children from low-income families and for minorities.

The focus of most school finance reform at the state level was tax relief and expenditure control. State reform measures resulted in:

- (a) greater state assumption of school costs and, therefore, a shift away from the local property tax;
- (b) a decrease in the range of expenditure variations among school districts;
- (c) greater equalization of tax burdens within school districts;
- (d) the retention of a degree of local choice in setting tax rates;
- and (e) reform of property tax assessment procedures.

Little attention was given to the equalization of resources for children based on educational need. Moreover, most states instituted some form of "power equalizing" which does not adjust for such disparities.

Post-"Rodriguez" Investment Threats

Over the past decade, at least twenty-five states have revised the methods through which schools were financed. These reforms have had little effect on the financial plight of urban school districts which in the 1977-78 school year, continued to face ever-rising costs, eroding revenue bases, and commands for the delivery of increased educational services to children. The Philadelphia school system suffered a decrease of 3,000 in personnel. Detroit eliminated all varsity sports, music, and art programs. Schools in Toledo, closed from October 13, 1977 to January 3, 1978 because of \$6.7 million budget deficit. Chicago, the nation's second largest school system, was forced to close sixteen days early when it fell nearly \$50 million below its needed revenue level. Intense fiscal pressures forced the Washington, D.C. schools to "freeze" a number of positions. Miami reduced student supplies by \$1 million. New Orleans placed a moratorium on in-service training for teachers in order to save \$250,000, and the Cincinnati Board of Education found aid-quality mileage increases so difficult to obtain that it filed suit against the state, claiming that Ohio's recent reform legislation was inadequate to provide a "thorough and efficient" education in urban school districts.⁴² At the federal level, the trend toward disinvestment was indicated by a \$21 million decrease in appropriations for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1975, which was designed to assist school systems and community groups to operate programs to reduce the effects of racial and economic isolation.

A particularly conservative mood tended to characterize the willingness of many citizens to support public education subsequent to Rodriguez. The overt manifestation of this unwillingness became evident after Brown v. Board of Education, and grew in intensity as desegregation became a northern problem. Although many states had reformed their methods of

funding public education the fiscal model upon which these reforms was based was not sufficiently sensitive to the unique educational needs of urban school systems which enroll a disproportionately large number of low-income pupils. Moreover, the unwillingness of citizens to support even these compromise reform measures led Cleveland's then mayor, Carl Stokes, speaking to participants at the National Policy Conference on Education for blacks in 1972, to conclude:

We have already found that citizens in most cities, especially in the predominately white areas, are beginning to vote down school bond issues. Whites are also moving to the suburbs. So taxes to fund schools are rapidly deteriorating. At the state level, there is a majority of white legislators who don't come from cities.

Staging the Threat

The state had been officially set at the federal level for disinvestment in public education in the early 1970's. The target of such disinvestment initially had been the desegregating urban school systems of the North and West. This fact became clear during congressional efforts to extend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1974. It may be recalled that, after nine years of implementation, ESEA was expiring at a time when the executive branch was hostile to its continuance and when school officials were deeply concerned over the declining local role in financing school costs. The administration, at that time, had expressed support for educational revenue-sharing with great local discretion. The administration also demanded that any extension of ESEA include sweeping restraints on the courts in school desegregation cases. In fact, the President had threatened to torpedo the entire \$26 billion measure if his demands were not met.

The bill brought to the House floor was, to a great extent, in tune with Administration wishes. The distribution formula would raise relative aid levels in the southern and rural states which had low spending levels. It would substantially increase funds flowing into a number of affluent suburban school districts, and sharply disinvest in the education of children in New York and Washington, D.C. In similar fashion, disinvestment in other large cities was evident.

Without question, much of the responsibility for disinvestment in public education may be attributed to the economy, but this is only part of the story. The other has to do with the rapid erosion of the nation's willingness to face up to the seriousness of the problems that years of racism have created, and a lack of the intensity and commitment the solution to these problems demand.

The Paradoxical Threat

Paradoxically, underutilized tax potential within the fifty states grew by 107.5 percent from 1967 to 1975. From 1974 to 1975, however, potential collections grew rapidly, due to rapid economic growth (including inflation) while legislated tax increases were infrequent. Thus, underutilization increased relative to tax increases. Tax collections increased by 7.9 percent and underutilization by 13.0 percent. In every region, except the Pacific, underutilized potential increased at a faster rate than collections, indicating a decline in tax effort.

Expenditure and Tax Controls

The Jarvis-Gann Initiative, Proposition 13, in California serves as an adequate example of school district tax controls. While this initiative,

enacted on June 6, 1978, was not the first attempt at tax and expenditure limitations, it certainly added impetus and support to efforts in other states. Proposition 13 slashed \$7 billion from property tax revenue, forcing a drastic revision in the funding of many of California's local public services. As a result of its passage, 29,858 education workers were temporarily idled due to summer school cancellations in 1978 and 11,746 local government workers were laid off. The California initiative limited property taxes to 1 percent of the 1976-76 assessed market value. Reassessment increases were limited to 2 percent annually, providing the property is not sold. Upon sale, reassessment must be based on current market value. Additionally, the legislature passed a major one-time-only income tax cut of \$625 million in the form of an income tax credit. An expansion of a circuit breaker property tax relief program for senior citizens and renters was also passed.

Even states with low property taxes have enacted tax controls. Alabama, for example, has the second lowest property taxes of any state in the nation. Meeting in special session, the Alabama Legislature approved a property tax relief package which calls for a reduction in the legal assessment standard for residential and agricultural property from 15 percent to 10 percent. A separate bill exempted business inventories from state and local property taxes.

In Idaho, property taxes were limited to 1 percent of market value, a .7 percent decrease. In like manner, voters in Nevada approved a constitutional amendment to limit property taxes to 1 percent of 1975 fair market value and assessment increases to 2 percent a year. In Michigan, the Headlee amendment placed constitutional limits on state spending and rolled back property taxes. Numerous other states,

including Missouri, Texas, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Maryland adopted such tax control measures,

Colorado imposed a statutory 7 percent limitation on increases in state spending. The Delaware Legislature passed a bill that limited state spending to 98 percent of anticipated revenues. Spending limitations were approved in many states, including Arizona, where state spending was limited to 7 percent of personal income and Hawaii, where the constitution was amended to link increases in spending to the state's economic growth.

State and local expenditure and tax controls provide a clear indication of investment decisions. As in Texas, where a constitutional amendment provided tax relief to homeowners, farmers, ranchers, and the elderly, and limited state spending to the growth of the economy, the result is not favorable to public education.

Disinvestment Via Fiat

Numerous instances of investment decisions resulting from the fiscal and/or political dependence of school districts have been observed in recent years. A classic example of such decisions was reported by the Lawyers Committee on Civil Rights Under Law after its study in South Carolina: The fiscal control of the public schools in that state remained in the hands of the local white power structure.

For the most part, school boards in predominately-black school districts in South Carolina continued to be appointed, rather than elected. Even where blacks constituted a majority of the school district population, they could not select their local school leadership. Moreover, the report revealed that most predominately-black school districts were fiscally dependent. This means that ultimate authority in fiscal matters resided in

another branch of local government rather than in the school board.⁴³

The allegation was made that, in many predominately-black school districts, the white power structure had reduced local support of the public schools through mileage reductions, resulting tax savings that could be used for payment of tuition in segregated academies and other private schools. Thus, black children who were receiving fewer educational resources in the segregated public system, frequently did so under a newly-created public-private system.

In summary, the South Carolina report indicated:

. . . Predominately-black districts on average, have much lower tax rates and local revenues than more heavily-white districts and thus provide less local revenue for public education than all other districts in the state. Furthermore, since desegregation, the situation has worsened, rather than improved. Predominately-black districts have fallen further behind more heavily-white districts in their support for the public schools.⁴⁴

The Nonpublic School Investment Alternative

An estimated 18,700 nonpublic elementary and secondary day schools in the United States enrolled an estimated 5.0 million pupils in the fall of 1977, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.⁴⁵ Additionally, nonpublic schools participated in the National School Lunch Program, at a cost of \$200 million in 1976-77. Approximately 82 percent of the country's nonpublic schools receive federal funding under various programs. An estimated total of 48.8 million pupils attended 106,700 elementary and secondary schools on or about October 1, 1977. It was estimated that 10.3 percent of these pupils attended nonpublic schools, and that 17.5 percent of the elementary and secondary schools were under private control.

Except for the Catholic schools, the demand for nonpublic school education has taken a decided upturn during the past decade. The upturn seemed strongest in the nonpublic schools that represent a protest against certain features of public education. The ethnically-oriented schools, for example, protest the inroads of mass culture, many religious schools protest the alleged moral drift in public schools, and other schools seem to protest either racial integration, or the take-over of local schools by distant bureaucrats, or both.⁴⁶

Over 55 percent of private school students come from families with incomes of \$15,000 or over, compared to 35.8 percent of public school pupils. Black and other ethnic minority students constitute 8.3 percent of private school enrollments, although minorities constitute approximately 17 percent of the school-age population.

Currently, many federal education programs mandating participation of nonpublic school students exist.⁴⁷ It is estimated that federal expenditures per private school student amounted to \$60, as compared to \$128 per public school student. The current administration has proposed allocating additional federal funds to private elementary and secondary schools.⁴⁸ As announced by President Carter on February 28, 1978, this proposal includes improving the flow federal funds to private schools. Of the \$6.9 billion the administration budgeted for elementary and secondary education in fiscal 1979, it estimated that \$100 to \$250 million would be channeled to nonpublic schools. With the changes proposed, the administration estimated that aid to private schools could double in fiscal 1980.

Moreover, Title XII of the Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education Act of 1978 provided for the appointment of a Deputy Commissioner for Nonpublic Education and the creation of an office to service the needs of nonpublic schools. The Deputy Commissioner will advise the Commissioner of Education and Executive Commissioner for Educational Programs on the formulation and development of long-range Office of Education policy regarding educational program services to private school students.

She or he will review Office of Education programs and procedures to insure the effective and equitable provision of mandated services, and he will work to insure that statutory mandates are being carried out in accordance with administration policies.

States also have provided funds and services in support of nonpublic education. These provisions range from loan or purchase of textbooks for nonpublic school pupils to tuition reimbursements and tax credits. On the other hand, many states have enacted laws which explicitly prohibit such entanglement and, in fact, any support of nonpublic schools with public funds.

At both federal and state levels, increased provisions have been made for the support of nonpublic schools. Simultaneously, court cases are pending to clarify whether such aid is constitutional. The extension of school services to the nonpublic sector appears to be inconsistent with the often-stated need to reduce spending and curtail services to public school pupils.

Tuition Tax Credits

Tuition tax credits, received a great deal of attention in the Ninety-Fifth Congress, and numerous bills have been introduced in the Ninety-Sixth. Much support has been generated for the provision of tax relief to middle-class families to alleviate the rising cost of college tuition. The main issue questions whether tax credits should be extended to families with children enrolled in nonpublic elementary and secondary schools.

In the Ninety-Fifth Congress, the House voted for the Vanik Amendment which would include elementary and secondary tax credits. The Senate, however, voted against tax credits and refused to include them in conference committee, thereby killing the measure. According to estimates of the

Congressional Budget Office, 59.1 percent of the benefit of the House bill would have gone to families with incomes in excess of \$25,000. Little or no relief was provided low-income families.

Opponents of tuition tax credits for elementary and secondary education contend that such credits would alter the present distribution of federal aid in favor of private schools. They claim that tuition tax credits would provide greater per capita federal spending for private than for public education. Whereas the current average federal expenditure per pupil for private and public education is \$60 and \$128 respectively, a \$500 tax credit, as proposed, would provide \$560 per private school student—more than four times the amount the federal government now spends on public school students.

Moreover, the attorney general had advised the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare that, in his opinion elementary and secondary tuition tax credits are unconstitutional. That opinion placed legislation such as that proposed in the Packwood-Moynihan bill within the scope of Committee for Public Education v. Nyquist.⁴⁹ This means that such a measure must have a secular legislative purpose, a primary effect that neither advances nor inhibits religion, and avoid excessive entanglements with religion in its administration. The office of the attorney general also viewed the proposed extension of the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program to include nonpublic elementary and secondary school education violative of the First Amendment guarantee against establishment of religion.

It should be noted that the debate related to elementary and secondary tuition tax credits was initiated in 1970, when President Nixon established the President's Panel on Nonpublic Education within the President's Commission on School Finance. This panel issued its report,

Nonpublic Education and the Public Good,⁵⁰ on April 14, 1972. Among its recommendations was prompt enactment by Congress of legislation to authorize federal income tax credit to parents for part of tuition payments to nonpublic elementary and secondary schools. In his 1972 campaign for reelection Mr. Nixon supported tuition tax credits for parents of children who attend elementary and secondary schools. By 1976, both Republican and Democratic platforms supported such relief.

It appears, however, that the provision of tuition tax credits for elementary and secondary education could have a corrosive effect on the public school and could result in public schools being populated almost entirely by the poor and racial minorities. What is more, they threaten to erode political and financial support for the public schools at the local level. Given the critical financial constraints of the public schools, especially in urban areas, an investment decision to further weaken them could have extremely detrimental effects.

The Voucher Decisions

Under a voucher system, a publicly-accountable agency would issue a voucher for each eligible child. This voucher could be turned over to any school which had agreed to abide by the rules of the voucher system. Each school would turn in its vouchers for cash. The set of ground rules for distributing money to voucher schools vary, generally based on one of seven alternative education voucher plans:

1. Unregulated Market Model provides every child with a flat amount or tax credit which the family could use to pay tuition at the school of its choice.

2. Unregulated Compensatory Model Makes the value of the voucher higher for children from low-income families.
3. Compensatory Private Scholarship Model allows schools to charge whatever tuition they wish, but, schools are required to provide enough scholarships so that no applicant's family is required to pay more than it can afford.
4. The Effort Voucher gives every school a choice between four different levels of expenditure, ranging from roughly the present public school level to two-to-three times that level. Schools at the lowest level would be almost totally subsidized by the state, although at each level parents are expected to pay at least a token charge. The size of that contribution would depend both on the family's ability to pay and on the cost of the school the family chose. The government would contribute the difference between what the family paid and what the school spent per pupil.
5. "Egalitarian" Model would provide vouchers of equal value to all children and would prohibit any school which cashed the vouchers from charging tuition beyond the value of the voucher.
6. Achievement Model sets the value of a voucher at the amount the school "needs" to educate the child, and whether the school actually succeeds in teaching the child what the state (or parent) wants taught.
7. Regulated Compensatory Model. The model resembles the egalitarian model in that every child would receive a voucher roughly equal to the cost of the public schools of the area. No voucher school would be allowed to charge tuition beyond the value of the voucher. If schools wanted to increase their expenditure per pupil beyond the level of the voucher, they could seek subventions from churches or from federal agencies and foundations. They could also increase their incomes by enrolling additional children who were in some way disadvantaged. The extra costs of educating these children would be defrayed by the state as a supplemental education fee.⁵¹

All the voucher plans described are designed to provide some parents and children with greater choice concerning education than does the present system. For this reason they are currently being called "Family Choice" plans. Voucher systems, however, are not new.

After Brown, several southern states sought to close their public schools and provide vouchers as a means of avoiding judicial mandates to desegregation. In Louisiana, a three-judge district court overturned a statute which would have permitted counties to close their public schools, sell or lease them to others, and provide tuition vouchers that could be cashed in by the private schools.⁵² A subsequent Louisiana statute sought to accomplish the same end. The court, noting the state's long history of resistance to desegregation, concluded: "The law was designed to establish and maintain a system of segregated schools" and had the effect of maintaining segregation.⁵³ In the November 1978 election, voters in Michigan soundly defeated a proposed amendment to repeal all local funding of schools and replace it with a voucher system funded from state income taxes. Currently, such a plan is being proposed in California

A California proposal would provide for three classes of common schools from grades kindergarten through twelve: public schools, public scholarship schools, and private scholarship schools. Public schools are those publicly owned, funded, and administered and are not certified to redeem vouchers, which are termed "scholarships." Public scholarship schools are those publicly owned and administered, and certified under the law to redeem scholarships. Private scholarship schools are those privately owned and administered and certified to redeem scholarships. The proposal allows parents or guardians to enroll their children in any public or private scholarship school subject to the right of every such school to set its total enrollment and to limit applications to children of either sex.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction is empowered to regulate selection among applicants by lot when applications exceed school capacity.

Further provisions are made for students who will be enrolled in voucher schools. These children are given priority, as are siblings of pupils with priority. Protection is provided students, once admitted against discrimination based on race, religion, or sex. State regulatory provisions are made for curriculum standards, discrimination in hiring, teacher qualification, and student evaluation. The proposal is to establish a thorough information system, and to provide parents with grants redeemable for the services of educational counselors who are without financial or other interest in any common school. Students will receive scholarships adequate for a thorough education and equal in amount for every child of similar grade level and circumstances. The redeemable amount may also be adjusted for pupil age, curriculum, bilingualism, special needs, variations in local cost, need to encourage desegregation of schools, and other circumstances deemed appropriate by the legislature.

The legislature is authorized to establish programs of loans, guaranteed loans, or similar capital aids to nonpublic schools. The average public cost per scholarship pupil is approximated as ninety percent of the average public cost, in the same year, of similar pupils enrolled in public schools. Teachers in both public and nonpublic schools would qualify for payment of teacher retirement costs by the state.

Another significant aspect of the California proposal is the extent to which expenditure limits are set. The bill would provide:

In school year 1981-82, the total public cost of elementary and secondary education in all common schools shall not exceed the total public cost of elementary and secondary education in 1980-81.

In school year 1982-83 through 1985-86 the total public cost of elementary and secondary education in all common schools shall not exceed the total public cost of elementary and secondary education in 1981-82, adjusted downward or upward by annual changes in average personal income adjusted upward for any increases in total pupil population of common schools. The controller shall authorize no payment in violation of this section and shall prorate subventions and scholarships uniformly to the extent necessary to achieve that end.⁵⁴

Among the probable effects of a state voucher system on that school district are: (1) the elimination of property taxes as a base for school funding, (2) reduction in public school enrollment, (3) an increase in aid to private and parochial schools, (4) an increase in the number of schools to a "sufficient number," (5) extension of aid for capital outlay to non-public schools, (6) increased state support for upper-income families, (7) the fostering of segregation by fixing the minimum and maximum on transportation distances, (8) the establishment of a two-level school system, e.g. common, scholarship, (9) an increase in accounting problems, (10) a tendency to track students into types of schools.⁵⁵

Conclusion

Pressures toward desegregation have eroded support for public education among large segments of the population, as predicted in one of several publications of the National Education Finance Project.

Federal pressures toward integration have almost certainly eroded general support for public, or governmental schooling among large segments of the population. These pressures may, of course, subside over the 1970s and taxpayers may prove to have been only temporarily dissatisfied.

There is, however, also the prospect that taxpayers will become increasingly critical of public school systems, once their reaction thresholds have been crossed initially under the impetus of external interference on race-mix grounds.⁵⁶

These threats to the support of public education did not subside over the 1970s and will probably extend into the 1980s. For black Americans, this threat is not new. In fact, investment history as it relates to blacks in American education is characterized by denial, threat, and compromises.

What is happening has far-reaching implications for minorities. The results of investment decisions made in the past are quite apparent. For example, the median income for black families in 1974 was \$7,808, while the median income for white families was \$13,356. Thus, black family income was only 58 percent of white family income, the same ratio that existed in 1966, a decline from 61 percent in 1969. If education is perceived as an investment in human capital, it is clear that a relationship exists in the value of the investment and the return.

The patterns of investment in the education of minorities illustrated in this paper lead me to the same conclusion reached at the conference on National Policy on Education for Blacks in 1972: The inferior social, economic, and political status of blacks in America is not an accident, but was created and maintained by the relative advantage it provided whites. Substantial upgrading in the economic status of blacks threatens the superior economic status of whites who will not make what they deem an unfair sacrifice unless required to do so. Thus, the effort to compromise on school finance issues will not be rewarded with concessions, but will simply remove the moral question posed by resistance, and will lead today, as it did when Booker T. Washington attempted his famous "Atlanta Compromise" in 1895, to a greater disregard for black

rights than would otherwise occur.⁵⁷

Numerous resolutions to this paradoxical situation have been proposed.

For example, James Buchanan proposed the exercise of four measures:

1. The restoration and maintenance of order in the educational process at all levels and in all jurisdictions.
2. The separation, to the extent that is practicable, of the process of providing education from the struggle for the achievement of racial equality.
3. The restoration of universality or generality in public educational programs, or at least, the preservation of the universality that presently exists.
4. Preservation of the school system's traditional functional role as the value-transmission agency in society.⁵⁸

Each of these propositions is unacceptable from a minority perspective, for the following reasons:

1. The restoration and maintenance of order in the educational process at all levels and in all jurisdictions seem not to respond to the problem of accommodating to an unjust system.⁵⁹
2. The separation of the process of providing education from the struggle for the achievement of racial equality appears to blatantly disregard the multiplicity of recorded displacements of black administrators and teachers; the discriminatory treatment of black students; the lack of adequate black representation on boards of education; the diverting of materials, equipment, and supplies bought from public funds to white segregated private schools; the lowering of school tax rates and successive defeats of school bond issues in school districts which enroll a high percentage of black students.⁶⁰

3. The restoration of universality or generality in public educational programs, or at least the preservation of the universality that presently exists, tends not to recognize tends not to recognize that the social experience which the child already possesses is valid and significant, and that this social experience should be reflected back to him as being valid and significant. It can only be reflected back to him if it is a part of the texture of the learning experience created. As stated by Henry David Thoreau, "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."
4. Preservation of the school system's traditional functional role as the value-transmission agency in society assumes the purity of traditional dominant values. School objectives must be stated and evaluations of the schools' programs should be made in terms of the development of new and desirable behaviors or the modification of old and undesirable behaviors. If schools can modify the culture (way of life) they may ultimately live up to their potential as agents for renewal and change. Otherwise, the school must face the imminent danger of becoming the most expensive irrelevancy in the American economy.⁶¹

More effective leadership must be provided at the federal level of government to sustain its commitment to equal educational opportunity for all citizens. The decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in Rodriguez, that the equitable distribution of school funds is a matter reserved to the states, need not result, as did the Compromise of 1876, in the unabated inequitable funding of education for minorities.

State policymakers must be informed of the probable effects of school funding options on poor and minority populations. They should be supported in their efforts to eradicate fiscal disparities which are based on income and race. Proposals such as tax credits, vouchers, and increased aid to nonpublic schools should be thoroughly analyzed to determine their racial and economic ramifications.

Local officials should try to determine if resistance to tax support for schools, while nominally focused on the worth of busing to achieve school desegregation, is not really a vehicle for debate by many white Americans as to whether the nation has gone "too far" in supporting black demands for equality in their society. That is to say, this difficult question must be squarely faced and viable solutions sought consistent with the response to it.

There is a threat of disinvestment in public education. Governmental officials at all levels--indeed all American citizens--should seek to eradicate that threat to a system which has greatly contributed to the social and economic growth of America through its investment in people. Continued disinvestment in public education threatens the attainment of the American dream that low social and economic status should have no bearing from the education of any child.

Recommendations

The pattern of investment in the education of large segments of Americans has been an uneven and inequitable one, and the threat of disinvestment is imminent. Since it is highly probable that these threats will continue into the 1980s, I offer the following recommendations:

- Numerous alternative school finance proposals will be advanced. More adequate monitoring of these proposals on low-economic and minority populations

will be required. A national task force might be established to study each proposal, to simulate the effects of each on selected populations, to disseminate information in this regard, and to provide a forum for minority concerns in school finance matters.

- Many oversights in the design of school finance systems have resulted from the lack of involvement of low-income and minority persons. Increased involvement, of all segments of the population, in the design and implementation of fiscal systems in education should be encouraged. The Office of Education and the National Institute of Education should provide the leadership by immediately involving representatives of low-income and minority citizens in the congressionally-mandated school finance studies scheduled to begin this year.
- The consideration of educational need remains a viable alternative in school finance investment allocation decisions. This concept has not been fully explored. Research related to financing of educational needs of children should be explored, taking into account recently developed educational cost data.
- An action agenda should be developed through a national action group which would utilize school finance research findings to encourage the implementation of equitable school finance systems.

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PUBLIC EDUCATION, PRIVATE EDUCATION AND
THE TUITION TAX CREDIT

Donald E. Frey

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INTRODUCTION

Although none has actually become law, several bills granting tuition tax credits for tuition paid to various categories of schools have passed one or both houses of Congress in the past several years.¹ The narrow defeat of a tuition tax credit bill in 1978, in the face of strong Administration opposition, suggests that new attempts will be made to pass such legislation. This paper considers tuition tax credits for elementary and secondary education.

The tuition tax credit is but one device whereby the government could extend aid to educational institutions. The tax credit belongs to that category of devices that aid consumers of education, thereby indirectly aiding the educational institutions. Under a tuition tax credit, a taxpayer would be allowed to subtract some proportion of his tuition payments, up to a certain limit, from taxes owed. For example, perhaps twenty-five percent of tuition, up to a maximum of \$250, could be subtracted from a person's taxes. A tax credit is said to be refundable if, when the credit is larger than the taxes owed, the government pays the difference to the taxpayer. A tax credit could be designed so that it would direct most of its aid to low-income taxpayers in at least two distinct ways. One would be to permit a credit for only that portion of tuition payments exceeding some percentage of a taxpayer's income. Another way, which was favored in early college tuition credit bills, would be to reduce the credit in proportion

to the excess of a taxpayer's income over a particular threshold. The tuition tax credit should not be confused with the tuition tax deduction, the tuition tax deferral, or the tuition voucher.

The tuition tax credit for elementary and secondary education raises many issues not raised by the tuition tax credit for higher education. Federal aid to nonpublic universities and colleges has been found constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court, whereas aid to largely sectarian, nonpublic elementary and secondary schools has not. Federal aid to nonpublic universities has not proved to complicate the racial integration of public universities, whereas public aid to nonpublic schools may complicate the process of integrating the public schools in some cities. Federal stimulation of nonpublic elementary and secondary education may undermine local support for public schools, whereas federal support for universities and colleges, which are generally not supported by municipal taxes, does not run this risk.

The public debate over the tuition tax credit for elementary and secondary education focuses on two issues. The first debate is whether the federal government should aid nonpublic schools at all. The second debate is whether the tuition tax credit is the best way to provide such aid, providing it is desirable to give such aid. I will assess here the major propositions advanced on both sides of the first debate and briefly discuss the desirability of the tax credit as a vehicle of federal policy in this area.

A STATISTICAL DESCRIPTION OF NONPUBLIC EDUCATION

Statistics on the nonpublic sector in elementary and secondary education are very uneven in quality.² The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) warns that "identification of all the nation's private schools is a difficult if not impossible task," not to mention the difficulty of collecting data from such schools if they are identified.³ Although U.S. Census household surveys do not encounter the problems encountered by institutional surveys, census reports focus more on the characteristics of the students and their families than on the characteristics of the schools.

In 1976-77, about 9.8 percent of elementary and secondary students were enrolled in nonpublic schools. According to responses to an institutional survey sponsored by the NCES,⁴ 88.8 percent of nonpublic-school students attended denominational (sectarian or religious) schools. Roman Catholic schools enrolled 73.5 percent of the total nonpublic enrollment, while the next largest denominational enrollment (Lutheran) accounted for only 4.8 percent of the total private enrollment.

Over a third of nonpublic students were found to be concentrated in the Northeast, i.e., New England plus New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Almost 60 percent were concentrated in the Northeast plus Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Illinois. By contrast, barely forty percent of the overall U.S. population in 1975 lived in those same states.

The nonpublic schools differ statistically from the public

schools. It is not widely appreciated that high school students comprise a smaller proportion of all nonpublic students than of all public students. Similarly, while public schools are required to provide programs for those with special needs, nonpublic schools do not generally provide such education. Of all nonpublic schools, only 5.8 percent provide special education for the handicapped; and most of the nonpublic schools providing such services are concentrated among independent nonpublic schools that are not affiliated with religious denominations, suggesting that these may be schools especially established for the handicapped. Only about 2.7 percent of the sectarian schools offer programs for the handicapped. About 3.0 percent of all nonpublic schools provide vocational education, and about 4.4 percent provide compensatory education. The statistical picture that emerges is of a nonpublic sector that provides a mix of services differing in some respects from the mix offered by the public sector.

SHOULD FEDERAL AID TO NONPUBLIC EDUCATION BE EXTENDED?

Are Nonpublic Schools a Needed Alternative?

Proponents of the tuition tax credit claim that urban nonpublic schools outperform urban public schools, thereby providing a high-quality alternative for nonaffluent students who would otherwise be forced to attend low-quality, central city public schools:

... Evidence suggests that the majority of parochial, inner-city students are reading above grade level, in sharp contrast to area public schools.

—Msgr. E. Spiers⁵

Private schools are an alternative to that [public school] monopoly, and are used as such by minorities.⁶
—Thomas Vitullo-Martin

The suggestion here is that the tuition tax credit would enhance the educational options of the poor. How can this be assessed?

The crucial question is whether nonpublic schools are a meaningful alternative to the "monopolistic"⁷ urban public schools. In some cities virtually all the affordable nonpublic schools are controlled by a single religious denomination, whose tenets may not be acceptable to many residents. Or there may be a nonpublic alternative for those children who happen to live near nonpublic schools while not for those who do not. If a lack of alternatives within the public school system is truly a problem, then federal funds might better be applied to developing alternatives within the public system, rather than subsidizing alternative education for some select students but not for all.

A crucial issue is whether urban nonpublic education is actually superior to urban public education. Although much impressionistic evidence on this point was presented to Congress last year,⁸ no rigorous evidence on this point was presented to the lawmakers. Such evidence could be obtained by comparing the performance of urban students in both public and nonpublic schools through the use of statistical controls or randomized experimental control groups. This would assure that differences in student achievement were due to differences in the schools' performance and not to underlying differences in the students themselves.

While it is clear that nonpublic-school students often achieve higher test scores than public-school students in the same city, the

absence of rigorous controls when such comparisons are made means that no conclusions about the relative merits of public and nonpublic schools can be drawn, for the nonpublic students might be a select group that is not comparable in all ways to the public students. Many speakers in congressional hearings last year attested to the fact that low-income parents often make substantial sacrifices to send their children to private schools. This is clear evidence of a selection process: the nonpublic schools evidently enroll students whose parents have an above-average interest in education--as evidenced by their willingness to sacrifice. If nonpublic students are not comparable to the public students, then evidence of their superior academic performance is not evidence about the performance of the schools. In fact, some of the evidence presented to Congress last year, when properly interpreted on its own terms, seems to suggest that at least some nonpublic schools do not excel at teaching.⁹

In 1972, the New York City Department of Planning reported the results of a study that compared, using a respectable methodology, the performance of public and nonpublic schools.¹⁰ Public and nonpublic schools in New York City were matched by geographic area, thereby providing a crude control for socioeconomic status. Rather than comparing levels of achievement, changes in achievement between two grade levels were compared for public and private students. By comparing changes, rather than levels, the initial advantages of the nonpublic students were removed from the comparison. Public schools produced more change than private schools when schools not receiving (ESEA) Title I money were compared. Private schools produced more change than public schools when Title I schools were compared. Such

mixed results seem credible.

In sum, the claims made by proponents of the tuition tax credit should be viewed as propositions that will remain open to debate for some time, rather than as facts that justify a significant federal initiative in support of nonpublic education.

Do Nonpublic Schools Save Society's Resources?

A classic statement favoring aid to nonpublic education is this:

If, for example, New York parochial schools were not providing an education for some several hundred thousand students, the taxpayers in our state would have to pay twice as much to the public schools to do it. ... As long as we are in existence and educate large numbers of children, more money is available per pupil for the public schools—not less.

—Harold J.T. Isenberg¹¹

Claims such as this raise numerous questions. Are nonpublic schools more cost effective than public schools? When private schools close, are public schools typically forced to ask for substantial increases in revenues? Does the existence of private schools result in higher per pupil expenditures (though lower total expenditures) in the public schools?

Since nonpublic and public schools do not produce the same mix of educational services, the comparison of average costs becomes problematical. We have seen that nonpublic schools provide relatively little in the way of highly expensive services, such as special instruction for the handicapped, remedial and vocational education.¹² In fact, although the quotation refers only to elementary education, we have noted that nonpublic schools provide relatively less high-school level education than do public schools.¹³ Finally, comparisons of measured money costs of nonpublic and public schools may be misleading

since nonpublic schools regularly utilize donated services that do not show up in an accountant's ledger.¹⁴ In sum, the cost structures of public and private schools are not comparable since they offer differing mixes of services, and the recording of costs is not done on a comparable basis (donated services being a major difference). Consequently, even some proponents of the tuition tax credit acknowledge that comparisons of costs in public and nonpublic schools should be treated gingerly.¹⁵

If a student were to be shifted from a nonpublic school to a public school, would the cost of educating him automatically rise? Despite the acknowledged difficulty of making average cost comparisons between nonpublic and public education, let us assume for the moment that average costs are substantially higher in public schools. Even if this were true, the average cost per pupil in the public schools would be an extremely poor estimate of the cost of educating additional students. In economic terminology, the marginal costs in the public schools should be substantially less than the average total costs. With declining student enrollments, public school systems have underutilized buildings, and other kinds of overhead inputs, such as administrative structure. This suggests that additional students could be accommodated in many public systems at a marginal cost below average total cost. Indeed, shifting pupils from nonpublic to public schools might lower average overhead costs in the public sector.

A stronger claim advanced by Isenberg is that the existence of nonpublic schools allows for increased per pupil expenditures in public schools. Evidence presented in the appendix shows that the contrary

is true. Although elementary arithmetic shows that the slices of a pie can be larger if there are fewer students to share the pie, the main result of larger nonpublic enrollments in a community seems to be to make the pie itself smaller. That is, parents whose children attend private schools seem to resist supporting the public schools. Sociologist Andrew Greeley, himself a proponent of aid to parochial schools, points out that "a distinct majority of the total Catholic sample (54 percent) claimed they would be against a tax increase for purposes of raising additional funds for public schools."¹⁶ (His reference is to a survey published in 1976.)

Does Equity Require Aid to Nonpublic School Users?

... [Nonpublic school] parents are faced with a double burden. Not only must they pay tuition but they are also required to pay rising property taxes—taxes to finance the public school system.

—Representative William Frenzel¹⁷

The issue is not whether users of nonpublic schools pay more for educational services than do the users of public schools. The real issue is whether such a state of affairs is equitable or inequitable. There is no inequity in the sense that nonpublic school users are denied access to public education while being required to support it, for users of nonpublic schools have access to public education on the same basis as anyone else.

Perhaps one could argue that there is an inequity when persons are unreimbursed for "saving" the government from needing to provide an education for their children. Such logic would suggest that everyone with any legitimate claim on the government, who fails to exercise that claim, is due a reimbursement. Thus, those citizens who avoid suing anyone, or being sued themselves, should receive a reimbursement for not adding to the burden of the courts. Or those persons

who don't consume certain products should not need to support government anti-monopoly enforcement in those industries. In fact, the "reimbursement" argument has almost no bounds and would apply far beyond the field of education.

Certainly the most difficult version of an equity argument is the one that suggests that many users of private schools should receive government aid because they are forced from the public schools; thus, it is claimed, the public schools are really not freely available to certain persons, and they should not be asked to pay both education taxes and private-school tuition. The claim here is that public schools, despite their supposed neutrality on matters of religion, actually take a covert religious stance that is so repugnant to some people that they are forced from the public schools. One reason for the formation of Roman Catholic schools in the last century was the perception that the public schools were both covertly and openly espousing Protestant ideas. In the present era, the issue has been redefined.

This argument is difficult because it hinges on the question of whether neutrality on religious issues is possible. Some claim that neutrality toward religion is interpreted by students as indifference to the importance of religion which is actually an anti-religious posture by the schools. Whether public schools that are neutral toward religion are in essence hostile to religion would seem to be in the eye of the beholder. While some perceive that the lack of a pro-religion posture amounts to an anti-religion posture, others would not exclude the middle position. That middle position holds that confessional religion is outside the competence of the schools, thereby guaranteeing a pluralistic society, where churches are the competent

agencies. Thus, while some alienated religious groups perceive themselves to be forced from the public schools, their subjective perception—while real to them—should not form the basis of public policy. There are other perceptions, which may be more consistent with American history and practice.

Is the Tuition Tax Credit Constitutional?

In the face of holdings by the Supreme Court, that aid to sectarian schools is unconstitutional as an establishment of religion, a major effort has been made in recent years to reinterpret the meaning of the first amendment:

What Congress intended by the First Amendment was to forbid the preference of one religion over another. At the time of the revolution, nine of the thirteen colonies had established religions. The establishment clause forbids the nation from having one.

—U.S. Senator Daniel P. Moynihan¹⁸

In the senator's view, the founding fathers would have favored aid to religious schools, so long as the aid was extended uniformly, to all denominations without preference. Even a stout supporter of this view in principle might wonder whether practical implementation would be possible. Would not the sects whose tenets required adherents to obtain only a minimum of formal education be treated to less federal largesse than denominations with a commitment to existing parochial schools gain at the expense of those that have been content to supplement secular public instruction with Sunday Schools, or other arrangements?

Contrary to conditions at the start of the American Revolution, the First Amendment to the Constitution was debated and submitted to

the states for ratification at a time when religious establishments were on the decline.¹⁹ Further, three of the four colonies which still kept religious establishments at the time of the first amendment's adoption (Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire), were originally settled by Puritans, and historians argue that far from being generally accepted, religious establishment provoked internal debate in these states:

Logically, the [Puritan] principles of independence, voluntary membership, and limitation of church power would seem to lead inevitably to a complete separation of church and state, and the force of this logic was not missed by the left-wing Puritans.

[The established Congregational churchmen] were, however, in a particularly vulnerable position when it came to defending the course they had adopted. Their conception of the church left them with no ready answers to the arguments advanced by their more consistent brethren to the left, and a defense of a confessional state in terms of the obligation of the state to God could only be made by ignoring a theological conviction which was the common heritage of Protestantism of a colonial America.¹⁹

In short, there are probably better grounds for the presumption that Americans, at the time of the adoption of the Bill of Rights, favored strict separation of church and state, than for the presumption that establishmentarianism existed in a favorable climate where Americans asked only that the federal government aid all religions equally.

A recent, short monograph by Michael J. Malbin illustrates the difficulties encountered by those who would revise the traditional understanding of the First Amendment.²⁰ Drawing from nonverbatim transcripts of the debate in the first Congress on the wording of the First Amendment, Malbin seeks to show that the majority meant the prohibitions on establishment to permit nonpreferential aid. Yet, despite his source

materials, Malbin is unable to answer one simple question: if Congress meant to permit nonpreferential aid to religion, why did it not say so openly, especially when the Senate explicitly considered versions of the amendment that were so worded?

Finally, while there are constitutional revisionists who would argue that it ought to be otherwise, the Supreme Court's strictures on aid to private schools are probably consistent with the original intent of the First Amendment. The three-part test for aid is that it must have a secular legislative purpose, its primary effect must be one that neither advances nor inhibits religion, and it must not foster excessive government entanglement with religion.

A U.S. District court for New Jersey recently interpreted the third stricture in the following manner when it ruled unconstitutional a New Jersey law designed to aid private schools in that state:

One need not be clairvoyant to know that if this New Jersey statute continues there will be increasing pressure to enhance it. This would enmesh New Jersey in continuing political strife over aid to religion.²¹

This is surely a fair assessment of political reality: once the principle of aid to nonpublic education were established, the magnitude of that aid would be an ongoing source of political pressure and counter-pressure. Such lobbying effort would not be limited to Congress, but would presumably spill over into state legislatures, where attempts would be made to pass legislation patterned on the federal model. When we realize that the general public, as it has indicated in public opinion polls and in special elections, is opposed

to aid to nonpublic schools the potential for public strife is even greater.²² Should opponents of the tax credit succeed in mobilizing this majority of public opinion, there would be ongoing efforts to repeal any nonpublic-school aid legislation that was passed. Finally, the potential for religious divisiveness and strife that inheres in legislation like the tuition tax credit may be seen in the attempts of proponents of the legislation to label their opponents "bigots."²³

A constitutional issue not related to the First Amendment arises when we ask whether it ought to be federal policy to aid private schools where constitutional protections, that normally apply to all public school students, are not in force:

The full panoply of students' constitutional rights may not apply in private institutions at all.²⁴

As nonpublic institutions, nonpublic schools can deny some protections of the Constitution to their students. The "due process of law" provisions of the Constitution grant protections to public school students such as procedural safeguards to protect them against arbitrary suspension or expulsion from school. Arbitrary use of authority is not necessarily foreclosed to private-school administrators.²⁵

While no one would deny the right of private schools to administer their affairs as they see fit, many persons would question whether the government ought to subsidize schools that insist on their right to adhere to lower standards for the protection of student rights than the Constitution imposes on public schools (and other public agencies).

Student rights is only one area where some private schools have insisted on their rights to ignore or disobey state laws and regulations.

Numerous religious schools refuse, on principle, to be accredited by state agencies, or to turn over to state agencies even minimal records, or to administer tests required by state law for all students.²⁶ Such schools typically argue that state certification would infringe on their religious rights. If a constitutional right of such schools to avoid any quality control by the state can be shown to exist, then one must ask whether it is wise to consider providing federal aid to schools that are in no way responsible to the state for the nature of their activities. The passage of the tuition tax credit would confront Congress with a dilemma: should credits be allowed for schools that insist on their right to be unaccredited, and thereby encourage potentially inferior education?²⁷ Or, should Congress deny credits to such schools, thereby penalizing them for merely exercising their constitutional rights? Either way, the tuition tax credit is an unattractive device.

How Would The Tuition Tax Credit Target Aid?

Federal elementary and secondary school aid is currently heavily targeted to disadvantaged children. Of total aid of \$4.9 billion in 1976, about \$3.0 billion was clearly directed at the economically disadvantaged (including some enrolled in nonpublic schools). In addition, the lunch and milk program added \$1.4 billion to children in economic need.²⁸ The tuition tax credit, as passed by the one house of the last Congress, would have imposed no need criterion and no device for otherwise limiting the tax benefits that would flow to upper income families. As such, the tuition tax credit would have spread benefits across the income spectrum, with a much heavier concentration of aid on more affluent

families than is true for existing federal programs for education. Although nonpublic schools service some lower income students, generally they serve a clientele that is more affluent than the population served by the public schools. Nonpublic schools enroll proportionately fewer low-income students than public schools, and proportionately more high-income students.

PERCENT OF ENROLLMENT BY INCOME CLASS OF FAMILY, 1976

	Income Classes					
	Below \$5000	\$5000- \$9999	\$10000- \$14999	\$15000- \$19999	\$200000- \$24999	Over \$25000
<u>Elementary</u>						
Public	13.2	21.3	24.2	14.4	9.8	8.9
Nonpublic	4.8	11.7	26.1	20.9	11.4	18.2
<u>Secondary</u>						
Public	9.7	17.5	22.8	16.1	12.5	12.4
Nonpublic	3.2	10.2	17.3	17.0	17.9	23.8

Source: Current Population Reports, P-20 Series No. 319 (Feb. 1978), Table 14.

Note: Rows do not total 100 percent due to incomplete reporting.

Although popular usage refers to the \$25,000-\$30,000 income bracket as "middle income," the median family income in 1976 was actually only \$14,958. Thus, it makes sense to characterize anything less than \$10,000 as lower income, and anything more than \$20,000 as higher in-

come. Under this classification, we see that nonpublic schools serve fewer lower income students and more higher income students than the public schools. The tuition tax credit, unless modified to reduce aid to higher income families, would indeed provide a substantial fraction of its benefits to families that in no way can be called needy, or even "middle income."

While it is true that the tuition tax credit would aid the affluent, given the current income composition of enrollment in nonpublic schools, the tax credit might induce changes in the income-composition of enrollment in nonpublic schools. In an appendix there is a discussion of what must happen for the tuition tax credit to change the composition of enrollments by income. Given our state of knowledge, it is not possible to tell whether the tuition tax credit would result in a weighting of nonpublic enrollments more toward high or low incomes. It is possible, however, that a tuition tax credit (such as passed by the House in the last Congress) would increase the proportion of higher income students in nonpublic schools at the expense of middle or lower income students. This perverse effect would shift benefits even further toward the affluent.

The Impact of the Tax Credit on Public Education

It would be a misreading of the situation to conclude, from the above analysis, that the tuition tax credit would have an impact only on the users of the nonpublic schools. The tuition tax credit may have powerful indirect effects on the quality of public education as well. To the degree that federal subvention of private education en-

tices more pupils to enroll in nonpublic schools, voter support for public education will be undermined, since parents whose children are not students in public schools seem to vote against public-school budgets:

I don't think that there are any communities around the country that haven't had tax election after tax election where public schools fail. Part of the reason they fail is parents sending their children to private schools are not willing to support many of those public tax drives.²⁹

This quotation, incidentally, is from a proponent of the tax credit, and it is supported by survey evidence reported by Andrew Greeley. Further statistical evidence on this issue is presented in an appendix, where it is shown that communities with large nonpublic-school contingents curtail per-pupil expenditures in the public schools. Because the tuition tax credit proposes to encourage use of private schools at the same time that users of private schools have the right to vote on public-school budgets at the local level, the tuition tax credit may undermine local patterns of support for public education.

The tuition tax credit may also affect other federal appropriations for education. (When the Nixon Administration supported the tuition tax credit in 1972, it openly announced that funds for the credit would be at the expense of other federal aid programs for education. Proponents do not currently issue such warnings.) Given political resistance to any further increases in the federal deficit, pressures would surely be generated to finance the tuition tax credit by cutting other federal aid to education.

Nonpublic Education and Race

The question of nonpublic education and race should be divided into three related, but conceptually distinct, issues:

- Do nonpublic schools in the aggregate serve a significant number of minority students?
- If nonpublic schools serve minority students, are those students enrolled in integrated or segregated nonpublic schools?
- Do nonpublic schools impede the integration of public schools?

Service to Minority Students

While it is clear that nonpublic schools do, to some degree, serve minority students, the relevant comparison is with the degree to which public schools serve minority students.

INCIDENCE OF ENROLLMENT BY ETHNIC GROUP AND RACE: PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE, 1976 (Percent)

<u>United States</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Spanish Or.</u>	<u>Mexican Or.</u>
Public	89.2	95.8	92.0	94.5
Private	10.8	4.2	8.0	5.5
	100	100	100	100

Central Cities

Public	80.2	94.5	88.7	92.0
Private	19.8	5.5	11.3	8.0
	100	100	100	100

Source: Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 319 (Feb. 1978).
Percentages derived from Table 3, excluding nursery school.

The table shows, for the United States, that while about 11 percent of

Whites attend nonpublic schools, only about 4 percent of blacks attend such schools. For central cities, the disparity is even greater--about 20 percent of whites attend nonpublic schools, but only about 5.5 percent of blacks attend such schools. Spanish origin children also have an incidence of nonpublic enrollment that is substantially below that of whites in central cities.

More revealing than figures on incidence, however, are figures on composition of enrollment.

RACIAL COMPOSITION OF ENROLLMENT (PUBLIC AND PRIVATE)
(Percent)

<u>United States</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>All Races</u>
Public	82.5	15.7	1.8	100
Private	91.8	6.4	1.8	100
<u>Central Cities</u>				
Public	63.1	33.8	3.1	100
Private	86.4	10.9	2.7	100

Source: Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 319 (Feb. 1978)
Percentages derived from Table 3, excluding nursery school.

Note: Spanish-origin students are not considered to be a separate racial group by census definition.

While in the U.S. as a whole, the private schools enroll disproportionately more whites and fewer minority students than the public schools, the picture is greatly exaggerated in the central cities. Central city public schools have a black enrollment equal to about 34 percent of the total, while central city nonpublic schools have a black enrollment equal to about 11 percent of their total enrollment. Central cities minority

students are all together about 37 percent of the total enrollment in public schools, but only about 14 percent in private schools. In short, even in the central cities, where nonpublic schools make their best efforts to serve nonwhites, the nonpublic schools serve relatively few minority students. Nor is it evident that tax credits would improve this situation. Instead, they could have perverse results.

Comparisons of Roman Catholic schools and public schools in several large cities give mixed results.³⁰ In some Roman Catholic systems, such as Chicago, the proportion of total enrollment that is black approaches that of the public schools. In others, such as Washington, D.C., there is a substantial black enrollment in the parochial system even though that enrollment is proportionately less than in the public system. Yet, in other Catholic systems (as in Boston), the black enrollment is small even in the face of a large black enrollment in the public system. Generally, the record for parochial schools is better with respect to Spanish-origin students. The implication of this is that in some cities, tax credits would be of little use to whites trying to avoid racial integration of the public schools, but in other cities the tuition credit would benefit persons attracted to nonpublic schools because they enroll few minority students. In short, the picture is mixed when we look at data from different cities.

Segregation of Nonpublic Schools

Knowing that nonpublic schools serve some minority students in the aggregate does not tell us whether these minority students are served by integrated or segregated nonpublic schools, or whether the whites in nonpublic schools experience integration. Some research results are

available for New York state. A New York State commission reported in 1973:

About one-half of the students in Catholic schools attend all-white schools—that is about 99-100 percent white. About one-half of the black and Spanish-surnamed students enrolled in Catholic schools are in schools with nearly equal balance between minority and white students. Over 80 percent of elementary and secondary students attend Catholic schools that are 80-100 percent white; 50.7 percent of elementary and 37.8 percent of secondary school students attend all-white schools.

Fewer than one percent of classroom teachers in Catholic schools are black.³¹

If integration means that the proportion of minority students in individual schools approaches the proportion in the system as a whole, then the nonpublic schools alluded to this report may have an integration problem, as do public schools.

The tuition tax credit bill that almost passed Congress last year did not directly address the problem of tax-credit for attendance in nonintegrated schools, preferring to use Internal Revenue Service standards of integration. But, proposed IRS standards are extremely weak. In order to maintain its IRS tax exemption a private school needs only enroll a proportion of minority students equal to one-fifth of the proportion of the minority school-age population.

Private Schools and Public Integration

The appeal of nonpublic schools to whites in central cities has the effect of making the public schools in those cities proportionately more

nonwhite than they otherwise would be, thereby making integration efforts more difficult.

In most cases, when the desegregation order [for public schools] is handed down, the Catholic schools attempt to support it.... Nevertheless, the very fact that a substantial portion of the city's white children are not in the public system impedes effective desegregation.³²

Should the tuition tax credit be passed, the likely effect is that it would further increase minority concentrations in the public schools, further hindering efforts at integration. Arithmetically, so long as the proportion of minority students among those induced to enter private schools by the credit is less than the proportion of minorities in the public schools, minority concentration will increase in the public schools.

REGULAR DAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS (in Thousands)

	1965	1967	1969	1971	1973	1975	1977
Elementary	4900	4600	4200	4000	4000	3900	3900
Secondary	1400	1400	1300	1300	1300	1400	1400

Source: NCES, Projections of Education Statistics to 1985-86, p. 15.

Aggregate estimates such as these conceal what is happening to enrollment in particular denominational school systems, but the general trend seems to be for some continued, slow losses in elementary nonpublic enrollment, offset at least in part by small increases in secondary nonpublic enrollment. The U.S. Census reports that between October 1975 and October 1976, nonpublic elementary (K-8) schools' enrollment declined by 5.7 percent, while nonpublic secondary enrollment climbed 1.95 percent.

By comparison, public elementary enrollment dropped 1.2 percent and public high school enrollments climbed .23 percent.³³ Again, the picture is mixed, with some categories of nonpublic enrollment declining faster than public enrollment. No definite conclusions can be drawn; it seems premature to infer that the nonpublic option will soon wither away if federal aid is not forthcoming.

There is also some question as to the efficacy of a tuition tax credit in increasing demand for nonpublic education. To be sure, a very large tuition tax cut would almost inevitably have some impact on enrollment in nonpublic schools. But would the kind of tax cut envisioned in recent legislation have more than a minor impact? Lacking good econometric evidence, we must rely on survey questionnaires. Andrew Greeley reports that in 1974, 71 percent of Catholic children did not attend Catholic schools: of the 71 percent, only 18 percent were attributed to costs being too high.³⁴ A variety of other reasons accounted for the other 53 percent, a major reason being unavailability of parochial schools.³⁵ This evidence suggests that while a tuition tax cut has some potential for increasing nonpublic-school enrollment (or reducing the rate of decline), that potential may be small.

Supporters of nonpublic schools often assert that if these schools are forced to close, their displaced pupils will become burdens on the public schools. Sparing the public schools this burden becomes the constitutionally required secular purpose for tuition tax cuts. Even during the six-year period of largest declines in private enrollments, however, (1965-71), nonpublic enrollment declined by 1.0 million, the equivalent of only 2 percent of the total public enrollment in 1971. This 2 percent was absorbed by the public schools over a period of six years at a

rate of something less than four-tenths of one percent of their own enrollment per year. One reason for the exaggeration of this problem in the popular mind is surely that most closings of nonpublic schools are well-publicized events and most people tend to assume that the displaced students will enter the public schools. But, most displaced students enter other private schools.³⁶ Thus, the gross number of displaced private pupils differs from the net number that eventually enters the public sector.

IS THE TAX CREDIT THE BEST WAY TO PROVIDE AID?

The Congressional Budget Office lists several formal criteria by which a device like the tuition tax credit can be evaluated.

The total cost of the tax credit is of great importance since a tuition tax credit would represent a completely new federal expenditure. As such, it would either require that other taxes be increased to compensate for the funds lost to the tuition tax credit, or that the federal deficit be increased by the amount of the funds lost, or that other federal programs be cut by the amount of funds lost. My own calculations indicate that a tuition credit, similar to the one passed in 1978 by the House, would have cost about one-third of a billion dollars per year, if enrollment patterns similar to those of 1976 prevailed.³⁷ To the extent that the credit induces heavier nonpublic-school enrollment, or is increased in magnitude over time, the cost would rise, perhaps significantly.

The efficiency of the credit can be viewed either in absolute or relative terms. Given the goal to be achieved, the credit would be relatively efficient if it attained the goal at lower cost than alternative

federal policies. It is difficult to make the relevant comparisons since proponents of the credit have suggested several purposes for the credit. For example, some proponents suggest that the main purpose of the credit is to allow low-income urban students to escape from public schools, others speak of the purpose being tax relief for middle-class families, and yet others speak of maintaining educational pluralism or "value oriented" education. Glossing over this major difficulty, we can still say that as a general rule, federal loans or tax deferrals would achieve most goals at a lower cost than the tax credit, since loans and deferrals are (largely) ultimately repaid.

The credit would be efficient in an absolute sense if most of the money spent contributed to the desired effect. For example, if the goal of the credit were to increase enrollment in private schools, the average cost for every new student induced to attend private schools would be very high if most of the credit dollars flowed to the parents of students already attending private schools. If the goal were middle-income tax relief, several dollars might be required for every dollar going to the middle-class if most students in private schools were from other income brackets. Since the goals of the credit are not clear, one cannot be sure what kind of efficiency the credit needs to achieve. However, it is fair to say that there were so few restrictions placed on eligibility for the credit that any precisely stated goal would probably not be achieved efficiently by the credit considered in the last Congress.

Equity in the tax system has to do with persons of equal income being treated equally, and persons of differing incomes being taxed in proportion to their ability to pay. The tax credit is more equitable than a tuition tax deduction which would favor higher incomes at the expense of

lower incomes. A nonrefundable credit, however, would be unavailable to the lowest-income groups. In addition, taxpayers of equal incomes would not be equally benefited, since those living in the Northeast are more likely to use private schools.

Much has been made of the ease of administering a tax credit. Proponents of the credit claim that the IRS would have a much easier time with the credit than HEW would have with some need-based substitute measure. But, much of the potential administrative difficulty of the tuition tax credit has simply been wished away by its proponents. If the tax credit law had specified a high level of audits of returns, and some system for certifying the eligibility of schools benefiting from the credit, (which it did not and which is a major failure of the bill), the administration of the bill would have rapidly become more complex. The tax credit is surely less visible and less controllable than any budget item in the federal budget that must be reviewed and voted on by Congress each year.

ENDNOTES

1. In the decade 1967-1977, tuition tax credit bills passed the U.S. Senate six times, although none ever passed the House of Representatives. In 1978, the House passed a tax credit bill allowing a 25 percent credit for tuition, up to a maximum of \$100 when fully phased in for elementary and secondary schools, and a maximum of \$250 when phased in for colleges. The Senate passed a bill granting a 50 percent credit up to \$500 when fully phased in, but only for higher education. The tuition tax credit was eliminated from the final tax bill in 1978 only because, in a pre-election attempt to adjourn, the House and Senate could not agree on a formula for aid to elementary and secondary education.

2. The National Catholic Education Association collects detailed and apparently good quality data from the Roman Catholic schools on some aspects of these schools. But, at the other extreme, some sectarian schools, primarily Fundamentalists, will not, as a matter of principle cooperate with any data-gathering agency.

3. U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, Nonpublic School Statistics, 1976-77: Advance Report (NCES 78-107a) Appendix, p.i.

4. Data on denominational affiliation and special services in this section are from Ibid., Table B and Table F.

5. U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means, Tax Treatment of Tuition Expenses (Hearings on February 14-21, 1978), p. 132.

6. Ibid., p. 243.

7. Unlike an economic monopoly, which is not responsible to the public and behaves only to maximize profits for its owners, the public schools are directly responsible to the public through various mechanisms, including election of school boards, laws, and public opinion.

8. Ibid., p. 365 ff.

9.

One private-school system presented test scores showing that its students in every grade exceeded the national norm as follows: grade one exceeded norm by 9 months; grade two by 7 months; grade three by 7 months; grade four by 8 months; grade five by 8 months; grade six by 10 months; grade seven by 9 months; grade eight by 13 months. (See House Ways and Means Committee hearings, p. 523.)

The figures show that, except for grade eight, the private school system has no cumulative impact on its students. They start in grade one with an advantage over the norm (set largely by public school pupils) of about nine months. All through the elementary years, excluding junior high level, the students retain this initial advantage but do not increase it. That is, this private school system starts in the first grade with advantaged children and does a merely average job of helping them retain, but do not increase, the initial relative advantage.

The fact that these data are not longitudinal (following one group of students over eight years), makes even these limited observations very tentative.

10. New York Department of City Planning, Three Out of Ten: The Nonpublic Schools of New York City (March, 1972), p. 81 ff.

11. Committee on Ways and Means, p. 86.

12.

In New Jersey, a state where most counties maintain separate vocational high schools, the average per-pupil cost in twenty vocational schools was \$2272 in 1973-74, whereas, the average cost in the state was only \$1239. Even regional high schools had average costs of only \$1480 per pupil.

13.

In 1973, 32 percent of public students were in high school, while only 26 percent of nonpublic students were. It is more costly to educate high school students than elementary students.

14.

Ibid., p. 488. Isenberg claims that the cost disparity in New York City remains even after accounting for donated services.

15.

U. S. Senate Committee on Finance, Subcommittee on Taxation and Debt Management, Tuition Tax Relief Bills (Hearings on January 18-19, 1978) p. 85.

16.

Andrew M. Greeley et al., Catholic Schools in A Declining Church, (Philadelphia: Sheed and Ward, 1976), p. 237.

17.

Committee Ways and Means, p. 54.

18.

Ibid., p. 552.

19. Winthrop Hudson, The Great Tradition of the American Churches (New York City: Harper and Row, 1953), pp. 54-55.
20. Michael J. Malbin, Religion and Politics: The Intentions of the Authors of the First Amendment (Washington, American Enterprise Institute, 1978).
21. Quoted in Committee on Ways and Means, p. 261.
22. A Roper poll reported recently that 64 percent of the public opposed a credit for private and parochial schools. (Reported in Washington Post, July 27, 1978). Aid for nonpublic schools appeared on the ballot in Michigan in November 1978 and was defeated. These represent only the most recent of numerous expressions of public opinion against aid to non-public schools.
23. Typical of this is an article in the Wall Street Journal (Dec. 14, 1978): "A New Anti-Catholic Bigotry?" This article merely repeats a theme sounded throughout the debate by Senator Moynihan.
24. Roy Lucas in The Rights of Americans, ed. Norman Dorsen (New York City: Vintage Books, 1972), p. 586.
25. In May 1978, the national press carried stories of a private school honor student who was forbidden to graduate with his class because he had been observed drinking beer off campus.
26. Sixty-two private fundamentalist schools are currently in litigation against the state of North Carolina on the issue of providing data. The refusal of such schools to administer state competency exams to their pupils is also likely to reach the stage of litigation.
27. The "free market" argument would counter that parents would not patronize inferior private schools, thereby driving them out of business; thus, formal quality-control by the state is not needed. This argument overlooks several facts: 1) parents may be unable to judge a school's quality, especially since education is a complex service; 2) much damage can be done to children before market forces can drive an inferior school out of business; 3) some parents may default on their responsibility.
28. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Statistical Abstract of The United States, 1976, p. 116. The \$3.0 billion is the sum of the funds in the "economic opportunity" and "educationally deprived" categories.

29.

Committee on Ways and Means, p. 149.

30.

The comparisons in this paragraph are based on data from the following sources. For Roman Catholic schools: Committee on Ways and Means, p. 408. For public schools: Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office for Civil Rights, Survey and Design Analysis Branch, "Report on 100 Largest School Districts from Preliminary OS/CR Survey File" (n.d.).

31.

New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education, The Fleischmann Report, Vol. I, pp. 424-25, (New York City: Viking Press, 1973)

32.

Gary Orfield, Must We Bus?, p. 61. (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1978).

33.

U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P. 20 Series, Nos. 303, 319, Table 3.

34.

It is possible that even 18 percentage points is too high a figure. "High cost" is an acceptable reason for not sending one's children to parochial school. Possibly some of those citing cost preferred to keep their real reasons to themselves.

35.

Andrew Greeley, et al, p. 236.

36.

New York Department of City Planning, p. 66.

APPENDIX

PUBLIC EDUCATION, PRIVATE EDUCATION AND
THE TUITION TAX CREDIT

Donald E. Frey

APPENDIX

Nonpublic Education and Public-School Quality

Proponents of aid to nonpublic school sometimes contend that public-school students will indirectly benefit from aid to nonpublic schools. If there were only a fixed amount of money available in a community for public education, then, if there were fewer pupils in the public schools, average per-pupil expenditures in the public schools would be higher. That is, if the resources available to the public schools can be represented by a resource "pie," each slice of the pie can be bigger if there are fewer students to share the pie. By this logic, nonpublic schools, by draining students from the public schools, actually improve the per-pupil expenditures for the students left behind.

The fallacy of this lies in the assumption that the resource pie is of fixed dimensions. In truth, as public-school enrollment erodes, voter support for public education shrinks and the diameter of the pie shrinks. Thus, the students left behind in the public system may have to share the pie among fewer people, but the pie itself is much smaller.

[There is an] understandable reluctance of parents who send their children to parochial schools to increase taxes to finance higher public school expenditures. As a result, those areas where parochial schools are important have great difficulty raising funds for public schools.

— Milton Friedman

We have already cited Greeley's survey results, which support his hypothesis. In addition, Elchanon Cohn, in his book titled Economics of

State Aid to Education, provides econometric support for the hypothesis, showing that there is a statistically significant inverse relation between the proportion of students enrolled in nonpublic schools in a state and per-pupil approved bond issues for public education.

The main purpose of this section is to report briefly some new statistical evidence on the impact of nonpublic enrollment on support for public schools. In order to measure how lack of voter support can reduce educational quality in the public schools, it was important to focus on a state where school budgets in most school districts are submitted to the voters and where a large fraction of support for local schools comes from local sources (so that a lack of local support for the public schools would not be masked by large state and federal contributions). Finally, it was important to focus on a state where districts vary considerably with respect to the number of pupils attending nonpublic schools. The study concentrated on a sample of 143 districts in New Jersey.

The model estimated was a reduced-form regression explaining average expenditures per pupil as a function of several demand-side and supply-side variables.

$$Y = -11.4 + .393 X_1 + .0048 X_2 + .023 X_3 + 1.72 X_4 + 1.21 X_5 + 4.88 X_6$$

(8.1) (4.0) (4.4) (4.6) (1.45) (7.1)

$$+29.4 X_7 + .83 X_8 + .035 X_9 - 1.3 X_{10} - .62 X_{10}^2$$

(4.3) (1.9) (2.2) (.99) (.76)

$$R^2 = .72 \quad N = 143 \quad F = 30.1$$

Y = expenditure per public-school pupil (in hundreds of dollars)
 X_1 = median family income in community (in thousands of dollars)
 X_2 = state aid per pupil (in dollars)
 X_3 = property value per public-school pupil (in thousands of dollars)
 X_4 = average annual wage for women in managerial occupations in labor market where district is located (in thousands of dollars)
 X_5 = 1 if teachers represented by AFT; otherwise, 0
 X_6 = proportion of public students in district in high school
 X_7 = proportion of public students who are in special classes
 X_8 = 1 if appointed school board; otherwise (elected), 0
 X_9 = percent of all pupils in the community who in public school
 X_{10} = average enrollment per building in district

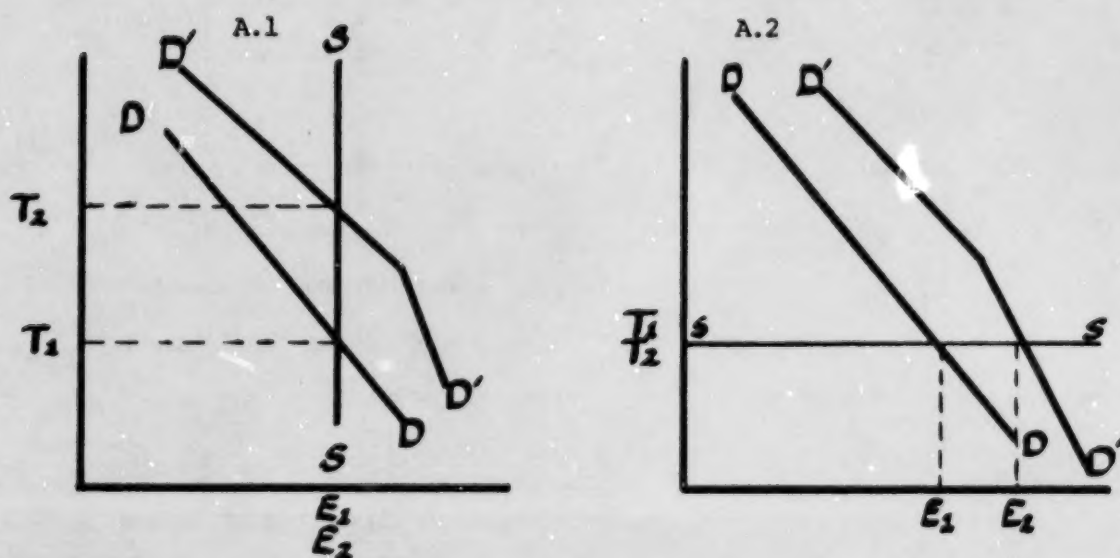
The results appear reliable, with no coefficients having signs opposite what one would expect, and coefficients being of reasonable magnitudes. The equation confirms that for this sample communities with greater resources (X_1 , X_2 , X_3) spend more per pupil, and that communities located in high-wage labor markets (X_4) must also spend more per pupil. High school students (X_6) are more costly to educate than elementary students, and special students are very costly (X_7). In fact, increasing the proportion of students who are in special classes by one one-hundredth increases average costs by \$29.40. But for the purpose at hand, the coefficient of X_9 is of most interest. It shows that a one percentage point increase in public enrollment as a percent of total students in the community allows average expenditure per pupil in the public schools to increase by \$2.50. This coefficient suggests that the shrinkage of the diameter of the public-school resource pie has a greater impact than the reduction in the number of slices that have to be cut from the pie when students leave for private schools and support for public education among the voters erodes.

Although the equation was estimated by ordinary least squares, attention was given to the possible endogeneity of X_9 . First, a lagged value of X_9 was used (from the 1970 census), thus eliminating the possibility that Y and X_9 were simultaneously determined. Second, the regression was repeated using a two-stage estimating technique. This estimating method increased the coefficient and its standard error. The increase in the estimated value of the coefficient means that our conclusion is, if anything, conservative.

The Economics of a Tuition Tax Credit

Some hold that the tuition tax credit will induce private schools to increase tuition fees in the amount of the credit, thereby "capturing" the credit for the schools. Others hold the opposite view, that non-public schools are unlikely to raise fees at all. These are analyzed in Figure A.

FIGURE A



In both Figures A.1 and A.2, the credit has the effect of shifting the demand curve for nonpublic education to the right (from D to D'), the distance of the shift being determined by the size of the credit. (The kink in D' occurs when the credit is a capped credit, such as was considered in Congress in 1978.) In Figure A.1 the supply of nonpublic education is shown by a vertical supply curve, encompassing the view that the number of places available in nonpublic schools is strictly fixed. Thus, according to the assumptions of A.1, the failure of places to increase at all when the credit induces demand to increase gives the private schools a chance to ration available places by raising tuition fees (from T_1 to T_2). When supply is completely inelastic, the same people attend the nonpublic schools after the credit as before, outbidding newcomers by driving up tuition fees until the new net tuition (tuition minus the credit) equals the old, pre-credit tuition fee. The schools capture the whole credit.

Figure A.2 is the opposite case, where supply of nonpublic places is represented by a horizontal supply curve. In this view, nonpublic schools can provide as many additional places as are demanded at the old rate of tuition. With an infinitely elastic supply, the credit causes no increase in the level of tuition fees, and the net paid by parents (tuition minus the credit) declines by the full amount of the credit. The full impact of the credit in Figure A.2 is to expand enrollment from E_1 to E_2 .

Obviously, the general case would be intermediate between A.1 and A.2. The supply curve is probably neither completely inelastic or elastic. In the general case, the number of places in private schools could be increased in the long run, but only in response to some increase in tuition

fees. The long-run impact of the credit in the general case is the following:

- a) tuition fees charged rise, but by less than the full amount of the tax credit;
- b) the net amount paid by parents (tuition minus credit) falls, but by less than the full amount of the credit;
- c) nonpublic enrollment increases;
- d) the enrollment and tuition increases magnify the costs of the credit program to the U.S. Treasury.

Effects on Enrollment Composition

Not only may the credit change the overall size of nonpublic enrollment, but it may change the composition of nonpublic enrollment, as between high and low income students, or white and minority students.

Case I

Assume first that nonpublic schools, unlike the profit-maximizing firms of standard economic theory, might not respond to price signals, refusing to respond to increased demand for their services by raising in the wake of passage of a tax credit. With the net price (tuition minus the credit) of nonpublic education falling, the number of places supplied would not increase (if we rule out cases like Figure A.2). The result: more places demanded than available. The important issue is who will be admitted to the now-scarce places in nonpublic schools. Non-price rationing will occur. In the case of Roman Catholic schools, for instance, which during "lean years" have to admit non-Catholics, the non-price method of rationing might be to give priority to practicing Catholics. Since the non-Catholics attending parochial schools are heav-

ily nonwhite, the result of the tax credit might actually be a reduction in the number of nonwhites served by parochial schools. One can also see that non-price rationing by competitive admissions exams would also tend to reduce the enrollment of less affluent groups in nonpublic schools. In sum, the tuition tax credit under the assumptions of Case I would probably lower the percentage of low-income and minority students enrolled in private schools.

Case II

If nonpublic schools were to simultaneously raise tuition fees (but by less than the full amount of the credit) and increase available places so that nonprice rationing need not occur, the impact of the tax credit on the racial or income composition of enrollment is ambiguous. Let,

- H = precredit enrollment of high-income (or white) students;
- L = precredit enrollment of low-income (or minority) students;
- E_H = tuition elasticity of demand of high-income students;
- E_L = tuition elasticity of demand of low-income students;
- P_H = percent decline in net tuition paid (tuition minus credit) for high-income students due to credit;*
- P_L = percent decline in net tuition paid by low-income students due to the credit.*

Now, of all students enrolled in private schools before the tax credit, the proportion that is high-income is $H/(H+L)$. After the passage of the tax credit, the proportion that would be high-income would be:

$$\frac{H(1+P_H E_H)}{H(1+P_H E_H) + L(1+P_L E_L)}$$

* must be stated as decimals instead of as percentage points for the formula, as stated, to be correct.

We can readily see that if P_{HH}^E is greater than P_{LL}^E the tax credit would increase the high-income student enrollment as a proportion of total enrollment. Stated another way, it is at least possible that the tuition tax credit would reduce the proportionate enrollment of nonwhites or low-income students in nonpublic schools.

Case III

Finally, assume that nonpublic schools respond to the credit by raising tuition fees and increasing the number of available places. However, assume that they, quite reasonably, expand places only in locations where the full cost of such expansion can be covered by the higher fees. Even though the tax credit might increase demand for nonpublic education in low-income neighborhoods, expansion in such neighborhoods probably would not occur since even with the tax credit the levels of tuition that could be charged would not cover the full costs of expansion. Rather, expansion would probably be limited to suburbs. Again, plausible assumptions raise at least the possibility that the tuition tax credit would cause private schools to serve a proportionately smaller group of minority or low-income students.

* * *

QUALITY AND EQUALITY:
THE REGULATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Arthur E. Wise

QUALITY AND EQUALITY:
THE REGULATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The theme of the conference for which this paper was prepared was "Restoring Confidence in Public Education" which, of course, suggests that there is some lack of confidence in public education. In order to understand this phenomenon, we first must have an accurate diagnosis of the cause of the loss in confidence in public education.

Are the public schools now worse than they used to be? I believe the answer is "no." Do they serve some children well? I believe the answer is "yes." Do they serve some children badly? I believe the answer is "yes."

If the public schools are not generally worse than they used to be, what has caused the loss in confidence? I suggest that the loss in confidence is a rationalization for not spending more on the education of minorities and the poor.

The quest for equality of educational opportunity in the allocation of human and material resources to students has been underway for several decades. The courts, the federal government, and the states have pursued policies intended to provide the equality of educational opportunity which local schools would not, or could not, provide. Progress has been slow, but there has been progress.

Increasingly, however, the courts, the federal government and the states have been drawn to the idea that they should try to improve educational quality as well. Some of these policies to increase the effectiveness of the resources employed in the education of students have been well motivated, some have succeeded; but some have had the effect of

retarding progress in desegregation and in school finance reform. Some of these policies have resulted in unnecessary and undesirable centralization and further bureaucratization of schooling. They pre-empt or circumscribe local decision-making, while some of these policies, indeed, have tended to shift the blame for the failure of education from the school to the student.

Rising Test Scores

It is widely believed these days that test scores are declining in the United States and that they have been declining for the last ten years. That is a conclusion which is contradicted by some facts to which I would like to draw your attention--facts which are generally not known for reasons that we should all wonder about.

Between 1971 and 1975, reading scores among nine-, thirteen-, and seventeen-year-olds remained stable, or improved. Improvement by young black students was especially noteworthy. The findings are a product of the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

A second study which was made in Indiana deserves attention. There, a test which was first administered to tenth graders in 1944 was re-administered in 1976 at the same level. The performance of students in 1976 was found to be superior to that of students in 1944, despite the fact that a higher percentage of students at the tenth grade level were in school in 1976 than in 1944.¹ The finding is especially surprising since the higher dropout rate in 1944 probably means that lower achievers were not present to take the test. In 1976, students of all ability levels were still in school.

TABLE 1

READING PERFORMANCE BY AGE, RACE, AND REGION:
1971 AND 1975

Race and region	Mean percent correct								
	9 year olds			13 year olds			17 year olds in school		
	1971	1975	Mean change	1971	1975	Mean change	1971	1975	Mean change
Total	63.98	65.20	*1.22	60.60	60.74	0.14	72.12	72.00	-0.12
White students.....	66.44	67.61	*1.23	63.27	63.53	0.26	74.38	74.80	0.42
Northeast, Central or West region...	67.03	68.31	*1.28	64.10	64.13	0.03	74.96	75.15	0.19
Southeast region.....	63.92	65.15	1.23	60.23	61.26	1.03	71.70	73.14	1.44
Black students.....	49.70	54.51	*4.81	45.55	46.39	0.84	55.21	55.43	0.22
Northeast, Central of West region ...	52.81	55.59	2.78	48.67	47.17	-1.50	57.58	56.68	-1.30
Southeast region.....	45.43	53.09	*7.66	40.96	45.58	*4.62	51.13	54.10	2.97

*Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

SOURCE: U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, unpublished data, undated.

A third fact: Between the mid-60s and 70s, while some test scores did reveal declines, others either revealed no changes or increases. Of tests examined by the National Institute of Education, half showed stability or increase rather than decline.²

And finally, the fourth fact has to do with the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) scores themselves. It is this set of scores which has received the most attention in the media. The fact is that full two-thirds to three-quarters of the widely-cited SAT decline was due to changes in the population taking the test; that is, more minority students, more female students, and more white male students of all ability levels began to take the test. That expansion in the test-taking population was the major cause of the decline.³

These four facts contradict the widely-held belief that all test scores are declining and consequently that students are learning less. While some scores have declined (writing on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, for example), the overall picture is cause for optimism.

Since the alleged decline in test scores is used to justify the "back to the basics" movement, and such innovations as statewide minimum competency testing (test requirements for graduation and promotion in the public schools), it is important to understand that the facts are being distorted. Why has the evidence been ignored? Why is there an apparent loss of confidence? The answer must begin with the media.

Bad news makes better press than good news. The information which I just cited has received scant, if any, attention in the media, while the modest decline in the SAT scores has been reported annually for the last half-dozen years. Media attention is merely the beginning,

however. Everyone looking at low scores can resonate with them to some degree. We all hope for the best and results always lag behind our hopes. Specific cases of poor performance can always be found to justify the perception that there is a general decline in the quality of education. But the major development is that the negative evidence is being used by fiscal and social conservatives to attempt to justify a decreased investment in American education.

My purpose here is not to paint a rosy picture but an accurate one, for only with an accurate picture can we begin to determine what we need to do. The loss in confidence is not the result of a decline in quality; it is the result of a re-emerging conservatism which wants to see the world as worse than it used to be. Having said all of this, we must recognize the serious problem of American education: some schools perform and others do not; some teachers teach and others do not; some children learn and others do not. Moreover, the problem tends to be concentrated in certain schools and school districts.

Regulation of Public Schools

In recent decades, the courts, the federal government, and the states have adopted a variety of policies to try to repair the deficiencies of local school systems. We have been trying to pursue two kinds of policies over the last ten to twenty years—those policies concerned with educational opportunity and those concerned with educational quality. Educational opportunity has to do with resources that can be measured, often in dollars. We can compare educational opportunity for different groups of children by measuring how much money is being invested in them. We can compare the kinds of programs being made available to

children of different races and of both sexes. Educational opportunity, then, is something which society, or the schools, makes available to students. Educational quality, on the other hand, is a characteristic of the resources which are made available. It concerns the effectiveness with which those resources are used to achieve the objectives which we intend for them to achieve. It is imperative that we begin to distinguish between these two policy objectives. Although it has often seemed convenient to pursue both objectives simultaneously, I believe that, as a strategy for the 1980s, we may wish to pursue them separately.

Desegregation

In the Brown v. Board of Education decision, there were two very different arguments. One argument was that segregation of the races was inherently unequal, that classifying students for the purpose of school assignment was inherently unconstitutional. Classification violated the constitutional prescription of equal protection for all citizens.

But there was another argument--that segregation had a harmful effect upon black children. The argument was accepted because it supported the desired conclusion. On the very day Brown v. Board of Education was decided, however, there was another decision, Bolling v. Sharpe, which dealt with desegregation in the District of Columbia. That decision said simply that classifying students on the basis of race in the public schools violates the Constitution. This classification rationale alone provides a far better basis for desegregation decisions. When you argue that segregation has a harmful effect on black children, you turn the issue from one of morality to one of pragmatics. That is,

you desegregate because you believe it will have beneficial consequences. As a result of this line of reasoning, desegregation moved more slowly than it might have, because each desegregation decision bore the burden of having to argue that desegregation would have good consequences, not only for black children, but also for white children.

That line of reasoning spawned a plethora of controversial, social-science studies which continue to this day, with social scientists assessing the consequences of desegregation for black children and for white children when, in fact, that is not the issue at all. The issues are whether school districts have a right to classify children by race and the quality of the educational opportunity made available to children of different races. It is demeaning to argue that these policies need to be pursued on the basis of pragmatics.

We have come a long way since 1954 and desegregation decisions have become increasingly complex. I would like to discuss one more decision, Milliken v. Bradley, in Detroit.

The decision called for the desegregation of the Detroit schools, but it also endorsed two fundamental principles. First, the court dictated certain programmatic interventions in the Detroit schools. It ordered the introduction of a specific remedial reading program; a specific in-service teacher-training program; an unbiased testing program; and a guidance program. While these programmatic charges may be educationally sound, there is a major departure in educational policy-making when a court makes specific curriculum decisions.

The second principle is that the State Board of Education, as well as the Detroit School Board, was held responsible for the segregation which existed in Detroit. While the state may be ultimately responsible in a legal and technical sense, when the courts make state officials

responsible for something, soon they are going to have to act to assure that their responsibilities are fulfilled. If state responsibility is perceived as extending beyond equitable provision of school resources, the state will become directly involved in the operation of local schools.

School Finance Reform

It is now well known that schools are financed mostly from local property taxes. This gives rise to inequalities from one school district to another in the amount of money available for the education of children. Most states do provide some equalization aid, but even after that equalization aid is distributed, inequalities still remain in the distribution of resources across the state. This led me to the belief that there needed to be a lawsuit which would force state legislatures to equalize funds.⁵

There are now a number of court decisions that, in principle, have called for equalization of educational spending.⁶ But, in the process, a couple of diversions have occurred. One diversion has been to taxpayer relief.⁷ Funds raised in the name of school finance reform have been used to narrow the range in taxes paid in support of the schools. While greater equity in the tax system for schools is a worthy objective, it has occurred at the expense of the equalization of resources. Taxpayer equity is an important objective; whether it should be pursued through school finance reform litigation is questionable. When new funds are used for taxpayer relief rather than for expenditure equalization, we are left to wonder about the value of the litigation.

Some other court decisions have been diverted in a different way. They have been used to try to reform the schools.⁸ Advocates in these

suits have not been satisfied merely to call for an equalization of resources, but have tried to use them as a vehicle to induce improvement in the quality of education.

Again, there has been a social-science debate very similar to the one which has occurred in the desegregation area. The question is a ridiculous one on the face of it: "Do more resources make a difference?" Give anyone a chance, and they will answer that question for you quite handily, but there has been a library of social-science research studies and multiple regression analyses assessing the proposition that the amount of money spent in the schools is, or is not, related to the quality or to outcomes achieved.⁹

I would like to draw your attention to one specific case—Robinson v. Cahill in New Jersey. That lawsuit began as a school finance lawsuit in the early 1970s; its purpose was the equalization of expenditures in the state of New Jersey. The case went through several iterations in a series of decisions by the New Jersey Supreme Court, which consistently held that the system of financing schools was unconstitutional. But, for a variety of reasons, the court got off the track and began to talk about something called "thorough and efficient" education. It became obsessed by the need to define the concept of thorough and efficient education—a concept that had no historical meaning in New Jersey. It is a phrase from the state constitution, with no clear meaning that the court was able to discover. Well, lo and behold, it began to mean what other states mean when they talk about minimum competency testing. The main result has been an elaborate new management structure to define and implement thorough and efficient education.

The structure has given rise, in principle, to a situation in which the State Commissioner of Education is supposed to know when any school in the state is not performing up to standard. When he determines that a deficiency exists, he will be able to intervene and, presumably, make resources available. So far as I know, that has yet to occur, although the state has been under court order now for several years.

The state did, of course, introduce an income tax which it had not had before, and, raised some \$400-million while not decreasing the range of per-pupil expenditures. In fact, it modestly increased the range in per-pupil expenditures, while achieving a modest degree of tax relief. I am told by those close to the situation that soon we will be able to talk about \$500-million being distributed in a quite similar way.

Now what has happened here? Advocates in this lawsuit, in their zeal to improve the quality of education, have played into the hands of conservatives who want to see the distribution of school funds follow the pattern that it has historically followed.

Consequently, I would counsel those who are thinking about school finance reform lawsuits—if their goal is the equalization of educational resources—to keep their eyes clearly on the target for there are those who will be trying to divert them from their objective.

Minimum Competency Testing

Finally, I would like to turn to minimum competency testing--state-level tests for high school graduation. Minimum competency testing is the latest attempt by state legislatures to make schools accountable to the state. Over the last ten to twelve years we have seen a succession of state laws embodying the jargon of both scientific management

and education. They go by such names as "educational accountability laws," and "competency-based education laws," and "systems analysis laws," and "planning, programming budgeting laws." The interesting thing about these schemes, of course, is they are not pie-in-the-sky proposals being developed by researchers; they are, in fact, the law of the land in a number of states.

Minimum competency testing is the latest of these. It is not a concern for educational opportunity as I define the term, because it has nothing to do with the distribution of resources. It is, presumably, a concern for educational quality. Those who advocate minimum competency testing assert that they are going to improve the quality of education in their states.

Who are the advocates? As I look around I notice that many are the same conservative state legislators who are sponsoring fiscal limitation measures. They are the people who argue that we should go back to the basics in education. They are the people who argue that if we have fewer educational objectives we will be more likely to achieve them than if we have more educational objectives. They are the people who argue that less government is better than more government, that lower taxes are better than higher taxes, and perhaps that less education is better than more education. Frankly, I question their motives.

Minimum competency testing has spread rapidly. Nearly every state either has it on the books or is contemplating it. It has spread so rapidly because it looks like a cheap fix for the difficult problem--the difficult problem that I mentioned at the outset: some teachers do teach, others do not; some students learn, others do not.

What does minimum competency testing do? It separates those who can from those who cannot pass the test. It does nothing new to help these students. One of its most pernicious effects is that--unlike some of the other accountability models--it places the blame on the child rather than on the school. In fact, one could imagine that it makes dropping out of high school look good compared to waiting around to be certified as incompetent. Soon we will have three groups of twenty-year-olds: those with the Grade A high school diploma; those with the Grade B school completion certificate; and high school dropouts. Who will employers hire?

Minimum competency testing has other effects as well. It enhances state control over education. It creates an obsession over testing not merely in those schools where children are going to have difficulty passing the tests, but even in those schools where children will have an easy time passing the tests. (By the way, the tests are going to have to be easy enough for most children to pass.) It increases the number of nonteaching personnel because only then can we know that a minimum competency testing program is in operation. Unless we have people around administering it, you cannot be sure that you have it.

Centralization and Bureaucratization

As a result of laws like these, the bureaucratic characteristics of schools are being strengthened. And it seems to me that we should be concerned about these developments. They begin to push in the direction of a large, centralized, bureaucratized, school system which is the state. As the state looms larger and mandates flow from it, we begin to evolve what is, in fact, a state school system. And if you

want to think what the consequences of that might be, you need only think about the worst aspects of the structure of the schools in our largest cities. I am not saying that we do not have some good schools in our large cities, but I am suggesting that city school systems are engulfed by bureaucracy of a kind that is not present in smaller school districts. As you create large school districts, you create elaborate bureaucratic structures to ensure that the will of the center is implemented.

Increased bureaucratization begins further to dehumanize the teacher, the school, and the children, because the kinds of management tools that are needed in a very large system are more impersonal than those which can be used in more intimate settings. When there is a more intimate connection between parents and the school board and the local schools, less bureaucracy is required to ensure accountability.

Some central policies are rational policies because they can achieve the results that they promised to achieve. Policies concerned with the distribution of opportunity can succeed. But some policies are hyperrational policies because they cannot achieve what they promise to achieve. Many central policies concerned with educational quality cannot succeed.¹⁰

Strategic Suggestion for the 1980s

As a strategy for the 1980s, I would suggest that we try to divide responsibilities among federal, state, and local governments. This means that activists ought to direct their attention to different levels of government as they struggle to solve different problems.

To the federal government, I would assign the responsibility of equal educational opportunity and the responsibility for research and development to improve the quality of education. I have made clear what I mean by equal educational opportunity, but I would like to call attention to the research and development role of the federal government.

I noted at the outset that reading scores among young children have been rising in recent years. Proof of the cause of this development is not conclusive but it may be due to a number of things that have happened as a result of research and development sponsored by the federal government. In the first place, research justified the creation of Head Start. It showed that unless we made early intervention in the social, emotional, and nutritional life of children that they would be less likely to succeed. We now have Head Start, a demonstration program funded by the federal government. Research into the viewing habits of young children led to the creation, implementation, and partial federal funding of Sesame Street and Electric Company. These programs are widely viewed by children. Research and development sponsored by the federal government has implemented the concept of individualized instruction. Many of the large-scale projects supported by the National Institute of Education have created individualized instruction programs now in use in many of our schools. The federal government created the Right-to-Read Program. Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which allocates federal funds for the education of children from low-income families. Under Title I of that act, funds are concentrated in the early years of the elementary school. Finally, the federally funded National Assessment of Educational Progress is the agency that has revealed that we have made progress in teaching young children

to read. I would place heavy bets on the prospect for research and development to improve education.

At the state level, we have to fix the responsibility for equal educational opportunity in terms of finance. I do not discount the possibility of some federal role here, but the states have the primary responsibility for the financing of education. If the court suits are pushed in the right direction, they will bring about a redistribution of funds. It is quite possible that states have a larger potential capacity for supporting schools than does the federal government.

Finally, I would push the search for improvements in educational quality at the local level. It is here that I would push for innovations that involve parents in the educational process and that involve teachers in the development process. It is here that we must fix the responsibility for the production of education. When we diffuse that responsibility among three levels of government, it is very difficult for local people to bear the full measure of responsibility for the quality of education in their school system. If you talk to local school board members, they talk as if they have very little discretion over the educational program. Compare that with the situation twenty or thirty years ago when they were clearly the final authority in education. If we do not like the kinds of people who are school board members, there is a way of solving that problem—the traditional way of solving the problem of elected officials who do not perform.

In conclusion, I predict that we will achieve greater equality of educational opportunity and a higher quality of education for all if we distinguish our approaches to the two; we will do better if we target our concerns appropriately at the federal, state, or local level.

ENDNOTES

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SEARCHING OUT THE BEST
IN URBAN EDUCATION

Lloyd M. Cooke
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Problem

A high proportion of youth in urban America drop out of high school. Many others finish high school with inadequate skills to compete for higher education opportunities. Larger numbers of youth cannot meet minimum communication and computation requirements for entry level jobs. These facts join to produce an almost insurmountable barrier to the social and economic rebirth of New York, Detroit, Cleveland and other major cities.

The quality of student performance is one of the most critical urban problems. While the vast number of students dropping out of or graduating from school with inadequate skills is a problem needing clearer definition, it is one that is attracting the attention, concern and efforts of several elements of society. College faculties, facing a growing number of students with serious skill deficits, are frustrated by their own inability to rapidly fill these gaps. As they develop and teach semesters of remedial courses, they cry out that high schools must do a better job of preparing youth for college. Similarly, the business community, forced in many cases to develop its own "schools" to teach basic skills, is calling on urban education systems to send them better prepared students. Entry level jobs go begging for young people with stronger skills in reading, writing and computation, and corporate headquarters are moved to locations where executives feel the schools turn out better prepared employees. A congressional staff survey of nearly 1,300 businesses in 10 major cities has concluded that

"noneconomic factors, like schools and crime rates, play a larger role in corporate decisions to expand or relocate in big cities than purely financial factors, like tax rates and labor costs."¹ And finally, and perhaps of greatest importance in the long run, parents and taxpayers are demanding that the schools be held accountable for the "products" they turn out. The minimum is the most significant manifestation of this demand.

Only a few years ago, the minimum competency movement did not exist. Today, about a dozen state legislatures have adopted minimum standards for high school diplomas and almost every other state has a similar course of action under study. "In effect," says Diane Ravitch, "the minimum competency movement is an educational consumer movement. It is the response of people who have lost confidence in the schools' ability or willingness to certify their own educational standards. It represents the reaction of parents and taxpayers who are concerned about the quality of education and who wish to find some yardstick by which to hold the schools accountable for their performance."²

Thus, in some ways and to greater and lesser degrees, each constituency views the poor performance of students and schools as a critical problem area. The explanations being offered for why the problem exists vary. Some suggest that the educational difficulties of poor and minority children may be related to or caused by differences in culture, physiological and psychological damage resulting from poverty living conditions, insufficient encouragement and outright prejudice. Attempts to resolve the problem naturally vary as much as the explanations. Such corrective actions include desegregation laws and practices, community-based school boards and compensatory education. While in most

cases these approaches have met with only limited success, it is important that these efforts continue vigorously—for political and social reasons, certainly for educational equality, and possibly for educational quality.

We believe that the underachievement of large numbers of children in our cities is due in large part to educators who do not know how to provide effective learning environments for poor or slow learners. The problem is further complicated by the fact that too many educators do not believe that slow learners can be enabled to achieve normal progress within the time, dollar, and staff constraints of public schooling. On the other hand, we have observed a sufficient number of classrooms and schools in which slow or poor learners are succeeding notably above expectation and above surrounding schools to be convinced that such exemplary programs may lead the way to a resolution of the problem.

PROPED

The quality of urban student performance demands that all elements of society work together to reach a solution. In a major effort to define action areas and to describe work that has succeeded in these areas, the Economic Development Council of New York City, Inc. (EDC), the New York Board of Education and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) have collaborated to design and launch a new program—Toward Proficiency Based Public Education (PROPED). It focuses on slow learners and underachievers and its goal is to identify, describe and replicate programs which advance the progress of such students.

Slow learning is a key factor because it appears to correlate with so many of the other problems of poor and minority children—

truancy, disruption, disaffection and poor academic performance. This emphasis grew out of results of Mastery Learning experiences, described by Professor Benjamin Bloom, which suggest that slow learners can complete the full content of courses under proper conditions.³ This is a radical finding for it challenges much of what has been the basis of modern teacher education and teaching. Yet, it may be the most promising approach to meeting the needs of an increasing proportion of students who are passing through schools without learning.

The purpose of PROPED is to help search out, describe, strengthen and disseminate those programs and classroom approaches which work best for slow learners and underachievers. Its proponents are convinced that there are enough examples of successful school experiences to justify an intensive effort to provide a solid data base with detailed analyses of these successful experiences in order to encourage and facilitate their spread to other schools and cities.

To help establish this data base, Toward Proficiency Based Public Education is developing criteria and procedures for determining if a program is exemplary as well as for describing its history, context or climate, implementation and accomplishments. In addition to reviewing standard measures such as test scores, attendance and promotion rates, PROPED is also detailing program start-up, constraints to development and installation, processes of implementation, the extent to which program environments affect rate of learning, community factors, principal, teacher and student attitudes, expectations and satisfaction, and cognitive and motivational outcomes. Analyses of both school and program elements are being conducted. The data obtained during case study research, observations and interviews will be most useful in

characterizing programs and determining which programs would best match which schools interested in replication.

The concept of Proficiency Based Public Education was stimulated by the knowledge that effective programs are already a part of many urban schools. Three such programs, Mastery Learning, the Bedford-Stuyvesant Street Academy and IMPACT II, provide examples of the kinds of outstanding educational approaches which spurred PROPED's development. We describe them in some detail here in the hope that they will encourage people in other communities to examine them critically and to adapt them to their own settings as a possible means of resolving similar problems. Because these three programs seem so valuable, PROPED supporters consider it desirable to have an opportunity to assist and participate in projects involving the study and spread of these approaches. It is probable that some aspect of each of these examples will be woven into their activities.

Mastery Learning

Mastery Learning is a set of strategies which has been shown to enable learners of varying abilities to reach high levels of achievement in a range of subjects. The most widely known form of Mastery Learning, developed by Professor Benjamin Bloom of the University of Chicago, has been studied, tested and revised over the past decade in elementary, junior and senior high schools, community and four-year colleges and professional schools both here and abroad. The results have been dramatic. In oversimplified terms, Mastery Learning demonstrates that what anyone can learn, all can learn, given proper learning conditions.

In the November 1977 issue of Teacher, Prof. Bloom explains that group instruction supplemented by frequent feedback and individualized help is the essence of Mastery Learning strategies.⁴ The group instruction is the same as the regular instruction currently provided by the teacher. The feedback is usually in the form of brief diagnostic, formative tests which indicate what each student has learned and what still needs to be learned before the task can be considered mastered. The individualized help, as needed, is provided to enable each student to learn the important points that were missed. When this is done well, Mastery Learning techniques insure that students have the necessary knowledge and skills for each new learning task and that they have confidence that they can learn each new one, since they have achieved mastery over the previous learning tasks. Over time, students develop a very positive view of their own learning capabilities. They become more active and involved in the learning and the teachers come to accept most of the students as having great capability to learn.

Mastery Learning strategies were developed around three constructs about students and their learning capabilities.⁵ The first construct, which has been in the education literature for fifty years, is that there are good learners and there are poor learners. It was believed that good learners could learn complex and abstract ideas and that poor learners could absorb only the simplest and most concrete ideas. This learning ability could be measured by aptitude or intelligence tests which could be used to predict school achievement.

Good and poor learning traits were thought to be permanent characteristics which would remain stable throughout the individual's life. And, in fact, the correlation between measures of school achievement

at grades three and eleven is about $+ .85$, demonstrating that over this eight-year period the relative ranking of students in a class or school remains almost perfectly fixed. Most teachers know and accept this construct from experience; in the beginning of the academic year they can predict how each student will fare at the end and they can do this with great accuracy.

"To accept this construct," says Bloom, "is to believe that the task of the schools is to constantly weed out and eliminate the poorer learners while encouraging the better learners to get as much education as possible. This construct is the basis for grading systems, streaming practices, and selective systems of education. Most school systems in the world are based on it and school authorities, examining boards, teachers, parents, and finally, the students themselves come to accept it.... The results are reflected in an economic and social hierarchy in many countries."⁶

The second construct--there are faster and there are slower learners--was developed by John Carroll of Harvard in 1963. Carroll's model postulated that students differed in their rate of learning. It suggested that if all students are given the same instruction in a subject and the same amount of time to learn it, the resulting achievement test scores at the high end of the curve. Under these conditions, aptitude tests do not predict ultimate achievement, rather they predict the amount of time a student needs to learn subjects to a high level.

Following this model, Bloom and his students set about to find ways in which this extra time and help could be given to students in a practical fashion. Techniques for using peer tutoring, aides, parents,

and reference materials were developed. Research showed that when given the extra time (the need for which decreased over the course of instruction), slower learners could become faster learners. In addition, compared to faster learners, they were able to learn equally complex and abstract ideas, they could apply these ideas to new problems and they could retain the ideas equally well. The typical result of the Mastery Learning studies in the schools is that about 80 percent of the students in a mastery class reach the same criterion of achievement (usually at the A or B level) as approximately the top 20 percent of the class under conventional instruction.

The third construct grew out of the research that Bloom and his students conducted during the past decade. It states that most students become very similar with regard to learning ability, rate of learning, and motivation for further learning when provided with favorable learning conditions.

This third construct challenges the first two and takes the position that learning characteristics such as good-poor and fast-slow can be changed by appropriate school conditions. The research demonstrates that under appropriate conditions almost all can learn whatever the schools have to teach. It indicates that special and very favorable conditions, such as extra time and help, may be needed at some stages of the learning, but that over time these may no longer be necessary. Expressed differently—all students can be taught how to learn, how to get information and retain it.

Success with Mastery Learning seems to depend on a few factors:

(1) Teachers must expect that their students can learn. This, certainly, is not a condition that can be mandated, but it is a condition

which develops rapidly as teachers begin to use Mastery Learning techniques and find that their students achieve much more than they would have predicted. (2) Students must expect that they can learn. This, too, is a condition which develops rapidly as students review their formative and summative tests and find themselves succeeding in areas in which they failed previously. (3) Work must be structured so that knowledge of all aspects of a learning unit may be measured. This requires a start-up investment of time to prepare curriculum materials in a Mastery Learning format. Once prepared, teachers using Mastery Learning techniques find their overall course preparation time slightly reduced.

Last summer the New York City Board of Education, the UFT, and PROPED sponsored a Mastery Learning training workshop for eight teachers. One of Bloom's students conducted the week-long session in which teachers learned the theories and techniques associated with Mastery Learning and developed curriculum materials for use during the year. A recent New York Times article reports that both teachers and students are experiencing positive results with Mastery Learning. Currently, PROPED is helping the Board develop a plan for training of a representative group of high school teachers.⁷

The Bedford-Stuyvesant Street Academy

The Bedford-Stuyvesant Street Academy is an alternative school which has served as many as 600 students at a time. Like other alternative schools, the Academy was developed to deal with those youngsters who could not make it in regular public schools, youngsters who, for the most part, were either poor, disadvantaged, disaffected, chronically

truant, slow learners, underachievers, dropouts or at risk of dropping out. Unlike other alternative schools, the Academy does not provide a full high school program; it is not the school from which persevering students receive their diplomas.

Established in 1968 under the auspices of the New York Urban League and supported by Union Carbide Corporation, the original Academy worked with fifty to eighty students each year and had no formal relationship with the New York City Board of Education. In 1976, the Street Academy was converted to an army of Boys and Girls High School, a NYC public school serving a low-income minority student body. The Academy now has a definitive organizational relationship to the board of education and receives board-allocated funds in addition to support from the Public Education Association and Union Carbide.

Students are referred to the Academy by the staff of Boys and Girls; these students are potential dropouts, troublemakers or disruptive. They are the students with whom teachers are having the most difficulty. In general, the students referred to the Academy are of average to below aptitude. Because of their problems in school, however, they have been unable to channel their abilities into positive experiences.

Street Academy students go through a three-phase environmental and learning readiness program called the Spinning Wheel. The first phase, an orientation, lasts six weeks and is devoted entirely to behavior training: Youngsters are enabled to build upon and transform values and behavior patterns into coping skills. For most Academy students, the major problem precipitating their referral is this inability to cope with an environment which they perceive as hostile. During the initial phase, students are helped to understand how they can operate, acceptably

and positively, within this school environment. They are not taught how to change the system, nor are they taught that the system is good or bad. Rather, training focuses on comprehending the elements of the system and learning how to behave within the system so that they may achieve their personal goals. Usually the goals are daily attendance at classes, acceptable classroom behavior and graduation—to get the diploma which they expect to give them a greater chance for a fuller life.

The second phase of the program, entry preparation, gives the student practice using the newly-learned coping skills in a classroom setting where remedial basic skill instruction is also provided. Because, in the first phase, students learned actual behaviors and skills, this practice is vital to ensuring that the behaviors will become integrated into the student's repertoire. Street Academy entry preparation classes are designed to closely resemble those which students can expect to find in their actual school experiences. They include teachers who are supportive and teachers who seem to expect that students will cause trouble; classmates who attempt to pressure students into breaking the rules; and all the administrative procedures that students must negotiate daily. The difference between these classes and regular classes is that at the Academy students have the opportunity to analyze their behavior and to come to understand why they succeeded in particular settings and why they may have had problems in others.

In the final phase, twelve to sixteen weeks after orientation, students come full circle; they are "spun back" into Boys and Girls High School while receiving continuing guidance and counseling. The Academy is successful in meeting its objectives with about 65 percent

of the "spun back" students. Such students attend classes and are motivated to learn; they are no longer truants nor troublemakers; they graduate and some even go on to college.

In the summer of 1977, an evaluation study of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Spinning Wheel program was carried out under the guidance of Professor LaMar Miller, New York University Graduate School of Education.⁸ The study included the preparation of a detailed description of the operating procedures and a workshop in which experts critiqued the description of the process and the overall purpose and effectiveness of the program. The evaluation team found that the program did meet its objectives; the youth were enabled to perform positively in the traditional school environments. They concluded, "This (the Academy) is a highly creative approach which has the potential to bring about significant changes in secondary education."

PROPED staff believes that it is important to extend the principles of the spinning-wheel concept into other settings. A major problem in replicating the Academy model has been the cost of a separate building and supplemental teaching staff to provide classroom work. PROPED staff have studied the model and believe that the same positive results can be obtained within the walls of a conventional high school. They are working with board of education groups to shape a plan and help raise funds for a demonstration project. The method of replication or adaptation, would be to allocate four teachers and three classrooms for the primary purpose of helping to improve the affective behavior or motivation of otherwise disruptive or absence-prone students and for the secondary purpose of providing, where necessary, remediation in reading and arithmetic. Students would spend no more than three periods

in this special section. The rest of the time, they would attend regular classes in social studies, science and electives. Eligible students would be expected to return to a regular school schedule after one semester in this special program.

PROPED staff is also working on another project involving the Street Academy. This one is directed more to cognitive than to affective development. One reason the Spinning Wheel concept works is because the school system does not always demand intellectual accomplishment for the diploma. Many schools issue a "diploma" primarily for non-disruptive attendance. This is changing, and properly so. In the future, students must also achieve a specific level of knowledge in fundamental subjects before receiving a diploma.

When students come to the Academy, they are well below grade in all subject areas and on the verge of dropping out of school. The Academy's primary concern is to teach the youngsters to cope with the school environment so that they will not drop out and cut off their chances for advancement. Given the limited amount of time students remain at the Academy, the Spinning Wheel has been remarkably successful in meeting this objective. The program's frustration has been that it "spins back" students who have become highly motivated to learn, but who still do not have competence in basic skill areas and who will still have to face the possibility of academic failure.

The Street Academy appears to be a fertile ground for the use of Mastery Learning techniques. Recently PROPED has worked with the Director of the Street Academy and his staff to begin a program of Mastery Learning in basic skills. Although final data from this experiment are not yet available, informal interviews with teachers and students are very en-

couraging. Teachers now feel that they are doing a more complete job with students and students are succeeding in those areas in which previous failure had, in many cases, caused them to exhibit disruptive behavior. The inclusion of the Mastery Learning approach in the Spinning Wheel model is expected to greatly enhance its effectiveness with slow learners and underachievers.

IMPACT II

As stated earlier, PROPEd's main goal is to help spread the adoption of the best in public education. It is not enough to find and analyze the best. It is only enough when all resources and ingenuity are brought to bear on replicating, reproducing or adopting the best in new settings. It was, therefore, fortunate that PROPEd was invited to work with the New York City Board of Education and the Exxon Corporation on IMPACT II.

IMPACT II is designed to identify exemplary classroom-based materials, approaches and techniques and to help make these innovations widely known through direct teacher-to-teacher communication. The replication of these innovations is encouraged by awarding modest grants to teachers who wish to test these approaches in their own classrooms.

The original IMPACT program was carried out in the mid-seventies in colleges and universities through the Exxon Educational Foundation. The premise of IMPACT was a strong belief that professors are anxious to share and learn about new approaches to education, that they want to improve their skills by incorporating these new approaches into their own battery of techniques, and that the best way to spread innovations

is by direct professor-to-professor communication.

To test the premise, IMPACT invited college faculty members from across the country to submit descriptions of pedagogical techniques and learning programs they had developed and thought easily "transportable" to other educational settings. Each year, an Exxon-assembled review panel selected five programs it considered most innovative, most effective, most suitable for widespread dissemination and most likely to be replicated. Exxon then prepared a packet of brochures containing descriptions of each of the selected innovations and a folder describing IMPACT. These packets were distributed nationally to college campuses.

Each description of an innovation included the name, address and telephone number of the innovator. The accompanying IMPACT brochure explained that teachers wishing to obtain further information about any program should contact the innovator directly. If, after communicating directly with the innovator, professors wanted still more information, they could apply to Exxon for attendance at a replication conference and then, if necessary, could apply to Exxon for a small grant to facilitate adoption of the innovation. In all instances, the initiative for learning about the program had to be taken by professors. The most exciting finding of this process was that for every professor who came to a conference and applied for a grant, five professors replicated the innovation without funds--the interest in learning a new approach, coupled with access to a colleague, was enough incentive to spur adoption.

From IMPACT, Exxon learned a great deal about how successful

teacher-generated education techniques are picked up and adapted by other teachers on the college level. When they began talking with staff of the NYC Board of Education it was with the idea of seeing how the lessons learned in IMPACT could be applied to a large, urban, public education system. The board has been encouraging innovation at all teaching levels and had some experience with facilitating replication through the National Diffusion Network. The Board was aware of many successful programs that would be ripe for dissemination and replication and was anxious to develop a second generation, pre-collegiate IMPACT—IMPACT II. Knowing of PROPED's commitment to ferreting out and making accessible what is working best in education, the board and Exon invited PROPED staff to join in their efforts.

IMPACT II, launched in March 1979, provides an opportunity to test the effectiveness of various means of encouraging teachers who adopt what has been found to be successful. At the collegiate level, professors contacted other professors, attended conferences and, in some cases, received small grants to implement innovations. The processes of disseminating information and facilitating replication were the same across all innovations. IMPACT II will use different methods to present different innovations.

Each IMPACT II technique selected by the review panel will be studied in-depth and described. Based on these descriptions, discussions with the innovating teachers, and consultation with experts at the board, a plan will be developed for introducing each technique and training interested teachers in its use. Thus, for example, it is expected that some innovations might best be presented at workshops using videotapes as training aids; the best way to learn about others

might be through having teachers visit the innovative classroom where they could see the techniques being used in a real life setting; still others might be presented in "traditional" training workshops with innovators and replicating teachers provided time to consult with each other at intervals during the term. The freedom to mix methods should generate useful qualitative data on how best to spread exemplary approaches from teacher to teacher.

The progress and reaction to IMPACT II will be carefully monitored and documented for they represent an opportunity to develop methodologies which can be applied to a range of educational programs and approaches. Of equal interest and importance will be the degree to which the focus on identifying, analyzing, and spreading exemplary programs carries over into other school system activities.

These are just three examples of programs which have served underachievers much more positively than conventional courses. There are many other examples and it is important to continue efforts to identify, describe and disseminate such educational approaches. The weight of evidence confirms the belief that much can be done to improve the current level of student achievement; there are many schools and teachers doing excellent jobs with pupils who, in other settings, would be considered problems. If widespread positive change is to be accomplished in the way slow learners and underachievers are taught and learn, then knowledge of effective programs must be shared among all urban communities.

The School Improvement Program

By focusing on the coalition work of PROPED, we do not mean to suggest that promising efforts by educators are not underway. On the contrary, we in New York are happy that the board of education and the new chancellor are committed to helping all children to learn. The most recent example of this commitment is the new School Improvement Program.

The School Improvement Program is designed to upgrade the effectiveness of those elementary schools which perform below average and whose principals wish to receive assistance. The program is based upon the results of several independent studies which contrasted the school-based characteristics of effective vs. ineffective urban schools.

Underlying the School Improvement Program is the belief that student achievement, particularly among poor children, is determined more by factors related to schools than by the personal and social characteristics of the students. Further, the program is based on the premise that those school factors which contribute to student performance are within a school's control. Thus, schools which are enabling students to learn to acceptable levels are not considered idiosyncratic; they are not thought to depend on one caring teacher, on a special mix of students, on a particular personality trait of a principal, on the socio-economic conditions of pupils and communities, nor on any other individual characteristic that occurs by chance and cannot be controlled. While an occasional, fortuitous set of circumstances may combine to create an effective school, the conditions connected with success can usually be purposefully created and controlled.

Ronald Edmonds, special assistant for instruction, New York City Board of Education, came to New York from Michigan where he conducted research and programs concerning effective schools. There, with his colleagues, he developed the School Effectiveness Assessment Instruments. Edmonds' extensive experience in Michigan led him to build the NYC program along similar lines.

The school factors Edmonds and his colleagues found to have the strongest influence on pupil performance are documented in the educational literature and provide a starting point for the School Improvement Program's analysis.⁹ The major school factors associated with student success are: 1) a principal whose leadership is strong and whose skills are both pedagogical and administrative; 2) a teaching staff which holds high expectations for all students; 3) an orderly and pleasant school environment; 4) an emphasis on enabling pupils to gain basic reading and computational skills; and 5) continual evaluation of pupil performance. These factors are deemed vital to a school's effectiveness and, most important, may be controlled, changed or modified by a school.

In New York City, the School Improvement Program will invite the participation of twenty elementary schools with a student body performing below acceptable levels. A School Improvement Program liaison person especially trained to work with school staff will be assigned to each school. The characteristics of twenty schools will be analyzed using School Effectiveness Assessment Instruments. Once the analyses are completed, the program's liaison personnel will work with school groups--principals, teachers, students, parents and community members--to develop improvement strategies. The entire process of analysis,

strategy-building, and implementation will be monitored and assessed regularly.

The School Improvement Program holds great promise for several reasons: It is based on sound research; it is developed from a successful experience in another urban setting; and it is supported by the system that will be responsible for encouraging and implementing change. These factors combine to give the new program a high potential for producing widespread, positive change.

Conclusion

This paper is meant to share with others who are interested in improving urban public education the highlights of a selected group of effective programs and, thereby, to encourage other communities to help increase the number of exemplary schools and classrooms. Even as the problems of educating the poor, the disadvantaged and the slow and underachieving have grown, so exciting programs to meet the needs of these students have grown. The dearth is not in the number of successful approaches available to educators and administrators, but in the instances in which successful programs have been used as learning models and adapted to other settings.

Not every exemplary program lends itself to replication nor does every school have an equal potential for successfully adapting new approaches. Identifying what is working well, analyzing the characteristics of these effective programs, determining how best to facilitate their replication, and then accurately defining the delicate match between innovative programs and school capable of adapting them, are new areas in educational study and there is need of much creative, hard work. It is this great need which makes the area so stimulating and

makes it so important that coalitions to be involved. If the work in New York City, or elsewhere, sparks an idea in any other urban center, and if there can be a regular flow of information from city to city, then the prospects for our troubled public education systems will be greatly improved.

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A NEW ERA OF EXCELLENCE IN URBAN EDUCATION?

What Can Be Done to Realize It?

Francis S. Chase

A NEW ERA OF EXCELLENCE IN URBAN EDUCATION?

What Can Be Done to Realize It?

In the early decades of this century, our great cities were pacesetters in elementary and secondary education. Generations of immigrants and children of immigrants developed their talents in the city schools alongside the descendants of early settlers. The large cities attracted and developed teachers and administrators of great vision, competence, and energy. Many distinguished urban educators provided national leadership for education, and many constructive innovations were introduced in large city schools.

Historic Perspectives

The last three decades have produced demographic, technological, and other changes with which the schools have found it difficult to cope. The result has been widely advertised declines in achievement, and increases in disruptive behavior, crime, and other symptoms of educational and social malaise. The sins of omission and commission of big city public schools are proclaimed daily in the press and other news media and have become the subject of numerous books. The attacks have been so widespread and virulent that educational achievements and the efforts to meet new challenges are often obscured. There is no question, however, that public schools in our great cities are having difficulty meeting the multiple demands made upon them by a society which has lost a great deal of its own sense of security and progress. Like the society they serve, the schools are beset by problems of vandalism, violence, drug abuse, and other antisocial behavior.

The efforts to equalize educational opportunities to desegregate the schools, and to adapt education to ethnic and racial minorities and the poor represent another side of the story. Despite the barrage of criticisms and the sometimes heavy-handed bureaucratic controls, school personnel have demonstrated creative energies in ways that offer promise for fundamental revitalization of education in our large cities. Even in the midst of the harshest criticism and the acknowledged shortcomings of the schools, there are always schools and teachers, programs and strategies, which raise hopes for a revitalization of education in our cities. Massive federal intervention, through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and elsewhere, has offered stimulation and support for equality of educational opportunity and greater attention to the needs of those for whom traditional schooling was inadequate or inappropriate.

The present efforts of schools to adapt themselves to a changing society represent a new--and, perhaps, a critical chapter--in a continuing struggle which has characterized the course of American history. American schools have generally exhibited a marked responsiveness to social developments and public opinion. As Edwards and Richey put it: "The history of education in the United States reveals a ceaseless flow and counterflow of consequence between society and school."¹ American public schools, for better or worse, appear to be more susceptible to changing social climates than are their English and European counterparts. Lawrence Cremin finds the explanation of what he calls a "built-in dynamism" in "the vesting of political control in the people" and the exercise of "ultimate oversight" by "elected representatives rather than professional schoolmen."² Other factors may be the restless

American temperament and future time orientation, as well as the openness of communications which makes national influences powerful in spite of a passionate commitment to forms of local control.

Because of this receptivity to change, the American elementary school has undergone profound changes, which Cremin documented admirably in The Transformation of the School.³ The public high school, also, has undergone a series of transformations since its appearance on the American scene in the early part of the nineteenth century. The period from about 1820 to 1880 represented the early stages in the development of a peculiarly American secondary school. The influence of European models was still strong, the curriculum was directed chiefly toward preparation for college, and admission and retention were highly selective. On the other hand, as Commager has noted, by that time the American "pattern was pretty well fixed: pluralism or local rather than centralized control of education; secularism, or separation from religious control; a general or liberal rather than a vocational education; and an education of the general populace rather than of the elite."⁴

From about 1890 to 1950 there was a persistent drive toward comprehensiveness of purpose and of population served. At the beginning of this period only two in every hundred young persons were completing high school; by the end of it the proportion had risen to about sixty per hundred. Not only did the high schools take upon themselves the task of preparing young people for work as well as for college; but they addressed themselves also to the absorption and Americanization of the large immigrant populations in our cities; and they committed themselves to goals of social adjustment, social mobility,

and democratization of society. Thus the comprehensive high school emerged in response to a national commitment to the education of youth, and was seen by idealists at various times as an attempt to carry forward the American dream on a rising tide of prosperity, to rescue it from the slough of the Great Depression, and to establish it amid wars and the threat of wars. It was a busy multipurpose institution, addressing itself to the needs of adolescents as these needs were defined by the contemporary culture. It was by and large in step with the demands articulated by American society in the period between the two world wars.

In view of the wide range of objectives they undertook and the rapid expansion of enrollments, the wonder is not that the high schools failed in many respects to achieve academic excellence, but that they did so much so well for so many. Despite the push to meet the educational and related needs of all youth, there were some groups in American society which, as early as 1950 and following, were sharing little in the benefits of high school education.

Up to the mid-fifties society was no more ready than the schools to face up to the new demands being shaped by the advance of science and technology, the worldwide clash of ideologies and commingling of cultures, and the spreading of aspirations to the "good life" among populations formerly barred by poverty, ignorance and oppression. A vague dissatisfaction with respect to American leadership in many fields was growing, however, and gaining expression. Increasingly, the schools, particularly the high schools, were being criticized as sources of our inability to allay the anxieties and solve the problems of the postwar period. The fear that democracy was being out-

stripped by communism in production, in military build-up, and in scientific development was highlighted dramatically by Sputnik I and succeeding developments. The poor work of the high schools in the sciences and mathematics was blamed for an allegedly critical shortage of scientists and engineers. More and more voices began crying for excellence and rigor in secondary education.

Many of the early critics contrasted the American high school unfavorably with the English grammar school, the French Lycee, and the German or Swedish gymnasium, conveniently overlooking the fact that the American high school was serving at least three times as large a proportion of adolescents as the schools with which it was being compared. Some even considered that the solution might lie in limiting secondary as well as university education to those with great ability to deal with the traditional content and modes of instruction in language and literature, history, mathematics, and the sciences. Calmer reappraisal led to agreement that the American achievement in providing schooling for a large proportion of youth between fifteen and eighteen should not be pushed aside lightly. Economists even traced a considerable share of American productivity to this fact. Gradually, sentiment solidified around what was called the "dual mandate of quality and quantity"; and the high school began to address itself seriously to the quest of a better education for all.

In the 1950s for the first time in many years, university scholars in appreciable numbers gave attention to the high school curriculum and the education of teachers. The federal government, through the National Science Foundation, made available generous funds for curriculum revision in the sciences and mathematics, and private foundations--

notably Ford and Carnegie—contributed support both for teacher education and curriculum study. Then in 1958 came passage of the National Defense Education Act with support for pupil guidance and college loans, as well as for instruction in foreign languages, mathematics, and science.

The proportion of American youth entering and completing high school has continued to increase. In 1930, the number of high school graduates was 29 percent of the number of persons seventeen years of age; in 1960, it was 64 percent; today it is approximately 70 percent. The high proportion of youth between ages fifteen and eighteen in school is in sharp contrast to European experience.

New Directions

Whatever vitality is found in the programs of the schools has its source in the surrounding society; and whatever powers and ideas are generated through education work out their effects in the larger society. Yet, this reciprocal relationship does not function automatically and continuously. The technological changes which have revolutionized communication, production, transportation, and warfare within the past half-century or less are not yet fully reflected in the school curriculum; and the impact of the American Civil Rights Movement has moved slowly, even under the spur of Federal Court decisions and the prodding of the Office of Civil Rights.

The nature of educational institutions is in itself a virtual guarantee that even profound changes in the conditions of life may have little effect in the schools until interpreted by educational theorists in such a way as to lead to the reformulation of knowledge, the production

of appropriate instructional materials, the reorientation of teachers and other school personnel, and the development of both professionals and public support for the necessary institutional changes.

My own efforts to analyze the contemporary needs of our society and of the individual in it lead me to postulate certain new emphases in the work of the schools. These emphases are already observable in pioneering efforts here and there, and some of them have already gained a fairly wide acceptance. The changes which I foresee in the schools constitute not so much new trends as a reinterpretation of traditional trends in the light of changed conditions, and a vigorous search for better ways of moving in the directions indicated.

For example, the American people have long expressed a commitment to the full development of talent wherever it may be found. Yet it must be confessed that American schools up to this time have had their major success with those whose early environments and hopes for the future have motivated them to learn and have equipped them for success in the pursuit of knowledge. Even in this favorably-situated population, the schools have a less than impressive record with those who are highly creative or behave in other nonconforming ways which set them aside from most of the docile learners who are content to address themselves to tasks set by the schools. In the 1960s, I advocated two new emphases: (1) increased attention to "slow learners" and to those who are victims of discrimination or of unfavorable environments; and (2) greater efforts to develop the highly creative, nonconforming, and especially gifted students.

No other age has ever made such heavy demands on the ability to communicate with one's fellows through the symbols of language; no other

age has demanded such full understanding of the concepts of space, time and number; and no other age has ever been in such great need of the ability to solve problems, to weigh evidence, and to make rational judgments. With every advance in science and technology, chances for productive work for the unskilled, the semi-illiterate and for non-adaptable persons become increasingly unlikely. There is increasing urgency, therefore, for the kinds of education which will provide access to productive work; and the demands underlying the extension and maintenance of freedom for the individual and the exercise of effective citizenship are even more urgent. The newly-found voice of peoples long inarticulate because of prejudice, poverty, illiteracy, and despair, add other dimensions to the demands on education. The condition of man in the modern world is not an altogether happy one. It is not likely to become happier until we find means to develop all members of all societies to the point that they can effectively control their lives and their surroundings as did the small minority in our most affluent societies who, in times past, had access to secondary and higher education.

The education of total populations is a goal never before seriously undertaken and no one yet knows for certain how successful the attempt will be, even if all available knowledge and resources are mobilized for the purpose. Yet, there is increasing evidence to support the thesis: The behavior which leads to social, educational, and economic disadvantage (as well as advantage) is learned in early childhood environments (including the school), and perpetuated by schools and other social structures. Children in "deprived" environments learn behavior and ways of interpreting stimuli from the external world which are not adaptive to, or functional for, academic learning. In their early years, children

receive a great deal of information of many kinds; and what they respond to, how they interpret the various stimuli, and how they react are largely determined by the factors in their immediate environments. In some environments the child develops specific perceptual and conceptual styles which do not contribute to academic achievement in the traditional school setting. Consequently, children from some cultures and backgrounds are intimidated and insecure when they reach school; and this initially inadequate self-image may be re-enforced by frustration and failure during the first few years of school. Lack of success in school learning may then become a source of blame, guilt, and fear on the part of the child and the parents and teachers. Thus the initial deficits of the early environment are accentuated under the conventional school program.

Research is beginning to suggest that the human capacity for learning is greater than most people have believed and infinitely greater than is provided for by current practices in the schools. New evidence also suggests that the capacity for learning is distributed more generally among the population than is usually assumed, and that environmental factors, particularly the environment of early childhood, may have a greater effect on the ability to learn than had been recognized.

Schools, like other institutions, function most readily with those who manifest values and behavior conducive to the smooth functioning and perpetuation of existing institutions. They are far less successful in dealing with those who doubt, question, or deny the validity or usefulness of existing arrangements and who want to follow their own bent even when this comes in conflict with socially approved goals. Content and methods must be diversified in such a way as to give more attention

to the gifted and the highly creative as well as to encourage the development of those who suffer from initial disadvantages in the development of abilities and career goals.

The new emphases, therefore, are in the direction of widening the reach of the schools, of more effective attention to the needs of those with whom the school has hitherto been unable to cope and also with those whose idiosyncrasies or rare abilities set them aside from the mainstream of learners. I foresee also new emphases with regard to the objectives or outcomes of education. Stated in broad terms, the educational objectives which will receive increased attention in the years ahead include the following: (1) to develop the capacity for critical and reflective thinking; (2) to inculcate effective technologies of inquiry for lifelong use; (3) to develop the capacity for participation in and enjoyment of the expressive arts; (4) to increase interest in public affairs and the capacity for contributions to community development; (5) to develop effective processes for choices among values, life goals, political decisions, as well as among alternative ends and means.

Among the new directions foreshadowed for education are the following:

- Increased attention to the disciplines of history, linguistics, mathematics, philosophy, and science as embodying (1) frameworks or concepts useful in ordering and examining phenomena; (2) technologies of inquiry for the discovery and testing of knowledge. The creative arts also play an enlarged role in the realization of human potential, including development of the cognitive powers.

- More emphasis on the expressive arts, including architecture, music, painting, the performing arts, poetry, and literature as means of self-actualization and socialization. In its broadest sense, such

an approach includes the whole community of mankind past and present as well as the building of a sense of community with contemporary groups.

- Thoughtful attempts to develop processes for choices among values, personal goals, political policies, social relations and so forth, and for application of these values to situations encountered in contemporary life.

- Greater individualization of learning experiences with particular reference to differentiation of approaches to enable all to achieve the objectives implied in Directions 1, 2, and 3. It is here that the new technologies and materials of instruction are useful.

At present, the signs of educational renewal and reinvigoration seem to be increasing; and some observers are bold enough to hope that our schools, including those in our cities, may be heading toward a new era of excellence. Through the Urban Education Studies described below, we hope to delineate more clearly the positive factors at work; to identify remaining obstacles to educational effectiveness; to discover strategies which hold promise for systemwide renewal; and to join others in discovering directions and means with which to create educational systems which will contribute powerfully to development of the full talents of all children and youth.

Need for Critical Re-Examination

In 1977-78, with the support of a grant from the Spencer Foundation, I initiated a series of studies designed to identify successful or unusually promising programs which center on one or more of the following: action-learning, experience-based career education, community services

and activities; multicultural education, bilingual instruction and other approaches to the recognition of cultural diversity and removal of racial, ethnic, and sex barriers to learnings; new approaches to the development of basic skills in reading, math, and other tool subjects; the creation of alternative schools and programs to permit choices by students and their parents among a variety of educational environments and programs; involvement of community groups and agencies in educational decision-making and in the provision of learning experiences outside the schools.

In 1977-78, descriptions of 599 successful programs were obtained from 30 of the nation's largest school districts; subsequently, organized teams conducted on-site studies of one week each in Atlanta, Dallas, Milwaukee, Oakland, and Toledo. The site visit teams were composed of eighteen to twenty persons and included six to eight large city district administrators or program directors, three or four faculty members from urban universities, four graduate students or substitute teachers and the director and two research associates of the Urban Education Studies. School board members also served as effective members of site-visit teams.⁵

In order to define more exactly the factors which affect the success of programs and to identify strategies that hold promise for system-wide revitalization, two complementary studies are being conducted during the current school year. Both studies are sponsored by the Council of the Great City Schools, and the University Council for Educational Administration is serving as a co-sponsor.

The first study, which is being conducted under contract with the National Institute of Education, is a direct follow-up of the studies

initiated in 1977. It focuses on (1) the general and situational factors which determine effective program implementation, the extent that objectives are achieved, and the prospects for assimilation of programs into continuing school district operations; and (2) the strategies and conditions which offer promise for systemwide revitalization and continuous adaptation to student needs.

The second study, supported by a grant from the Spencer Foundation, focuses on the actual and potential uses of research and evaluation data in the participating school districts, and an appraisal of changes in practices resulting from knowledge acquired through research and evaluation.

Cities which are participating in one or both studies include Atlanta, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dallas, Detroit, Indianapolis, Norfolk, Philadelphia, and Portland. In every city, we are identifying schools and programs which bring new vitality to education at every level. Most of these programs result from local initiative and imaginative leadership in adapting the school curriculum, instructional methods and materials, or other aspects of the learning environment to the backgrounds, cognitive styles, and aspirations of learners. Nearly all of them have come into being through the extensive involvement of parents, community leaders, or both; and the great majority of them use resources outside of the school, such as museums, public services, health services, business, and industry. In a very large number of cases, local resources were supplemented by federal or state funds, or both. In most systems, the curricular changes are reinforced by the the installation of instructional management systems, by well-planned programs of staff development, and by the systematic collection of evaluative data to ascertain the relevance

and effectiveness of processes and to assess the effects produced.

Under present conditions, realization of the potential contributions of education to the full development of all members of society takes on new urgency. Discontinuities in the culture and the malfunctioning of social institutions make it necessary to engage in an earnest search for ways of making education more relevant to the needs of our times. New conditions arising from technological and cultural changes have made educational institutions and techniques inadequate, if not obsolete. The rapid increase in the amount of knowledge with which schools must deal and new perceptions of the nature of knowledge are other factors which contribute to this rapid outmoding. The worldwide intermingling of cultures produced by revolutionary advances in transportation and communication make all cultures relevant; and new technologies of warfare make any problem in any land a possible trigger for worldwide devastation. Moreover, the application of technologies in business, industry, and government results in a steady replacement of occupations which require few skills with those requiring precise communications, skill in quantitative thinking and the exercise of judgment. The fulfillment of the individual today requires a broader education than that required previously, and the mounting need for personnel with highly developed linguistic, mathematical, scientific and other specialized abilities puts pressure on education to discover and develop unusual talents.

Perhaps an even more important factor is that aspirations to a better life and expectations for higher standards of living are being expressed today in every segment of society and in every country in the world. These expectations so far outrun present means of fulfillment that

tensions develop which threaten to erupt into violence unless means are found to close the gap. The complexity of the data that enter into decisions and the speed with which decisions often must be made render unlikely the prospect of wise decisions by poorly educated and ill-informed persons. The education now available to a large proportion of our population provides an inadequate basis for participation in decisions on public policy. Meantime, crime, poverty, overcrowding, pollution of air and water, traffic paralysis, and other problems in our cities generated additional demands on education. The basic skills continue to deserve the highest priority; but it is also important that all students be introduced to the modes of thinking and the insights into man's achievements and shortcomings that are provided through great literature, history, the arts, and sciences.

Consequently, it is imperative that thoughtful citizens join educators in a critical re-examination of the functions of education and the extent to which these functions are being served today. Education should be designed to contribute to at least four distinctive types of personal development:

The ability to make wise decisions regarding goals and activities.

Helping individuals choose with care the goals to which their lives are to be directed is a function which has been neglected, partly because of confusion regarding values and ways of helping individuals choose among conflicting values. The great religions, traditional ethical systems, and philosophy all hold potential clues to a solution of the problem, but it is a problem to which many institutions and agencies in our society must address themselves in order to help the schools play their appropriate parts in developing the ability to choose goals wisely.

The ability to select and use appropriate means to the achievement of goals. The aim of education should be to help the individual find and employ effectively the necessary and proper means to the achievement of goals. Education involves all the skills for learning, for vocation, for problem solving, and for the discovery of new knowledge. Schooling is now the major vehicle for education, but it cannot be said that present-day education is fully effective in developing the ability to achieve goals in learning and in other activities.

The capacity and the disposition to apply aesthetic and ethical criteria to the manner in which goals and objectives are achieved. This deals with what may be called the style of behavior and involves considerations of form, sequence, harmony, and precision. It also involves consideration of the impact of goal-seeking behaviors on one's own character and on the lives of others.

The capacity to respond to an increasing range of events, natural phenomena, and relationships with understanding, appreciation, and appropriate overt action. This capacity is developed through reflection on or reconstruction of experience and leads to the development of powers for subsequent use. The aim is a steadily enlarging capacity to respond with satisfaction to one's self and to others, to nature, art, science, technical excellence, and to a wide range of personal and social relationships.⁶

The kinds of educational functions which I have presented are difficult to translate into objectives which will govern the selection of content and of instructional methodologies and techniques. Yet we must find ways of moving toward such outcomes in order to enhance our individual lives and create open, free, and humane societies.

Encouraging Developments

In the 1977-78 Report of the Urban Education Studies, I identified five encouraging developments which were stated as follows:

Urban Education has an inner vitality which is generating innovative programs and strategies of great potential even in the midst of extremely adverse conditions. We are discovering many administrators, teachers, and other staff members who are demonstrating ability to arouse zest for learning in students from diverse backgrounds, including those whose histories have been marked by failure, loss of hope, and/or anti-social behaviors.

There is a deepening concern for the needs of those not well served by traditional schooling. Fewer educators and board members now attribute low achievement to inherent disabilities, lack of effort, or poverty of parents; and more and more are revising upward their expectations for students formerly regarded as slow learners. Efforts to adapt the curriculum to students and to create motivation and conditions for effective learning are likewise increasing in a number of schools and programs.

An increasing number of community agencies and groups are joining with schools to develop enriched environments for learning; and the gulf between schools and society is being bridged in many ways. The recruitment of citizen volunteers to serve as counselors, resource persons, and tutors is gaining momentum; and larger and larger numbers of parents are being involved as partners in the education of their own and other children. Opportunities for experience-based education are being considerably enlarged through part- or full-time employment and internships. Business

and industry are lending their resources and facilities for an expanded range of experiences which foster the development of responsibility, provide an understanding of the values of different kinds of occupations, and contribute to the development of knowledge and skills. Training and on-the-job experiences also are being made available through hospitals, medical and dental offices, child care centers, and services for the aged. Unprecedented opportunities are being opened to many students in the performing and visual arts, in museums, and other cultural institutions. Internships in the several branches of city, state, and national government are offering new understandings of the responsibilities of citizenship, as well as career exploration.

Innovative programs and alternatives are producing significant changes in the character of educational experiences provided at both elementary and secondary levels. With the active support and participation of community organizations and citizens, educators in many cities are creating significant alternatives to traditional and inappropriate classroom experiences. Observations of these innovative programs, and interviews with students, gave evidence of increased motivation and zest in learning for many students with a wide range of backgrounds, aspirations, and learning styles. The direction of change in a number of the more successful and promising programs appears to be away from an excessively verbal curriculum toward the offering of choices among a variety of experiences in the arts, community institutions and services, and places of work and recreation. Prescriptive instruction and passive student compliance with teacher assignments are being replaced by responsive modes of instruction and by learning experiences adapted to student's expressed needs and interests. Consequently, the range of

options open to students and their parents is significantly broader than the options presented by the traditional elective system of choices among academic, vocational, and other traditional offerings.

The conditions essential to the success of magnet schools and other options are beginning to be better understood; and progress is being made toward creation of these conditions. Systematic curriculum development and modification is proceeding with improved provisions for initial and continuing staff development. The need for better counseling to help students make wise choices of experiences is being recognized; and efforts are being made to adapt instructional materials, facilities, and technologies to student characteristics. In addition, there is a more general acceptance of the importance of evaluation at every stage of development, implementation, and subsequent operation.

On our continuing visits to city public schools, we are discovering many developments and attitudes which seem to foreshadow a new era of excellence in urban education. One perceptive member of our site-visit team—after four days of visiting schools in a large midwestern city and discussing program development and implementation with teachers, principals, regional and central office administrators—reported evidence of "vigorous executive leadership" which was keeping the goals and objectives before all personnel at all times so that "people had to a large degree internalized system goals and objectives." The same observer also noted structures for "informal coordination and evaluation," accompanied by "shared values and shared patterns of behavior" which were leading to "high expectations for students, teachers, administrators and other staff personnel." The observer concluded that systematic planning and wise use of resources were becoming "a way of life."

The optimistic view cited above is shared to some extent by more than a hundred experienced administrators and university professors who have participated in the Urban Education Studies in the past two years. These same observers are well aware, however, of many remaining obstacles to making education equal to the demands and needs in our great cities and elsewhere. Among the obstacles are "the institutional qualities of school life." In a recent article, Popkewitz examined institutional barriers and concluded that:

The problem confronting educational reformers is complex and profound. Schools contain systems of thought, action, and privilege which resist efforts to change. Efforts to change become slogans and rituals that are incorporated into the existing order. The rituals create an illusion that the school is responding to its constituency while the needs and interests actually being served are those embedded in the structures of schooling.

He adds:

... Educational planning involves giving attention to the social, political, and educational complexity of schooling. Where reform programs do not consider the underlying patterns of school belief and conduct, innovations may only rearrange the technological surface.⁷

Fortunately, in a number of cities, educational planners and administrators are aware of the realities of institutional life and are devising ways of overcoming the inertia in large school systems. Institutional inertia, however, is not the only obstacle to educational reform; and the complexity of human nature and human society make im-

possible any final solution, any perfect plan, or any complete match of educative experiences to human needs. We must, therefore, engage in a series of never-ceasing quests, (1) to gain better understanding of the full range of human capabilities, with special attention to the potential that has been submerged by disabling previous experiences or lack of appropriate challenges; (2) to establish home-school-community environments conducive to the full development and constructive use of the capabilities of all members of the population. In their efforts in these directions, city school systems use a combination of concepts, strategies and technologies which raise hopes for increasing the relevance, scope, and quality of educational experiences. The efforts are no longer confined to experiences provided in, or under the control of, schools; but embrace also experiences offered in homes and by an array of community agencies. Many of the new approaches involve complex partnerships or other relationships with agencies with which school personnel have not been accustomed to work. Consequently, educators have had to learn to work with those from other occupations and cultures who often hold divergent views of the roles and functions of schools and other social agencies. It is not surprising, therefore, that every innovation, however promising, brings with it new sets of problems.

The Rise of Alternative Schools

The site visits conducted by the Urban Education Studies revealed many outstanding examples of curricular and other adaptations to needs that have not been met by traditional schooling. Examples were also found of strategies and technologies which hold promise for system-wide revitalization of education. In the descriptions given below, no

attempt is made to conform to the categories of developments listed above, because most of the examples combine characteristics of community involvement, institutional change, curricular innovations, and new planning and management systems. While the examples cited exhibit potential for increasing the scope and effectiveness of education, it is recognized that other developments may have at least equal merit. Certain of these trends and developments can be found in one form or another in all city public school systems.

The School District of Philadelphia has developed an unusually extensive project of early childhood education which offers eight major programs and serves more than 50,000 children at 700 sites. The programs included are:

- A Child Care Program which serves almost 1500 children including infants and toddlers, nursery, kindergarten, and school-age children; and operates from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. every weekday for twelve months a year.

- The Day Care Services Program which serves approximately 10,000 children of preschool and early school age (including the mentally handicapped or retarded) through 44 agencies, 165 centers, and 202 homes.

- The Follow Through Programs which reach nearly 16,000 children in grades K-3 in 62 schools.

- A Kindergarten Program for more than 22,000 children operating in 197 schools.

- A Parent Cooperative Nursery Program for 400 three- and four-year-old children.

- A Prekindergarten Head Start Program which serves more than 800 children.

- A Walnut Center Program which serves 265 prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first-grade children on a half-day basis.

- The Durham Child Development Center serves children from two months of age through grade 8, and provides learning centers and teacher centers.

All these programs emphasize parent involvement and cooperative relationships to other social agencies. The funding for the several programs comes from Title I, Title XX, and other federal programs, city welfare, and local operating funds. All programs offer dental, medical, nutritional, and psychological services.

A special Research and Evaluation Unit has evaluated the programs positively with respect to the impact on kindergarten and school performance and to improvement in reading in grades K-6 as related to participation in prekindergarten and the Follow Through Program.

Columbus has established five elementary schools which offer students and parents alternatives to the conventional elementary schools. Enrollment is voluntary and 25 percent of the building capability of each school is reserved for neighborhood applicants, while the remaining positions are filled by lottery from citywide applications. Three of the notable features of the Columbus Alternative Schools are (1) the participation of parents in determining the philosophies and curricula of the schools; (2) the careful attention given to the selection of a principal committed to the school philosophy and goals; and (3) the principal's participation in staff selection. The five alternative schools are the Douglas School, which stresses humanistic approaches with multi-age and multigraded groupings; Indianola Informal, which emphasizes opportunity for exploration, manipulation, and real life

experiences; Linden Park, which uses the Individually Guided Education model; and Oakland Park and Stewart traditional, both of which emphasize structured, teacher-directed programs and set high achievement standards in all basic subjects.

Detroit has opened an unusual alternative in the Burton International School, which serves 391 kindergarten through sixth grade students. It is multi-ethnic, multicultural, and multilingual learning center which now enrolls students from thirteen national cultures; and which draws on the resources of the local community and parents in planning and implementing its programs. The Burton School is one of five city-wide schools in Detroit.

Milwaukee has established the Elm School for Creative Arts to offer in-depth experiences with art, music, dance, and drama in addition to the regular school subjects. It began operation in the fall of 1977 in a beautifully restored 1893 building with high ceilings and wide-board flooring. The building has been restored and redecorated with rainbow striping on a beige exterior and murals representing Olympic themes on the interior walls. The concept of "children as artists as well as pupils" proved so attractive that applications came from all parts of the city. The result was enrollment of 56 percent white students in this school which formerly enrolled few nonblack students.

In Indianapolis, the Montessori Option is one of six alternative programs designed to provide a choice of teaching and learning environments at the elementary level. It is a pilot program occupying two classrooms in a K-8 elementary school and enrolls fifty children aged five to eight. The planning of the Montessori Option has involved a high degree of interaction and cooperation among school personnel and

parents. Qualified Montessori consultants advise in the planning and the training of staff. The apparent success of the first year has led to plans for the development of other Montessori schools. The children in the public Montessori pilot program come from a large geographic area and represent various kinds of early school experience. Some children have been in public school kindergartens, first and second grades, some from private and parochial school kindergartens, first and second grades, and some from nursery school.

Montessori methods found some acceptance early in the century, usually in private schools, and Montessori schools are now appearing in a number of city public school systems as an alternative for parents who value a highly structured learning environment with carefully designed manipulative, as well as textual, materials. Another elementary school alternative which gained wide acceptance between 1968 and 1975 is Individually Guided Education (IGE), developed by the Wisconsin Center for Cognitive Learning. Still another is the Open Education Model developed in British Infant Schools.

Alternatives to junior high schools and middle schools are a more recent development; and alternative secondary schools have multiplied during the past two decades and now exist in a bewildering variety of forms. In many cities, they are referred to as magnet schools, especially when a primary reason for their establishment is to promote desegregation—often under orders of federal courts. Alternative high schools were established, however, long before the Civil Rights Movement or the 1954 Supreme Court decision, which declared unconstitutional the separation of schools on the basis of race. For example, the Bronx School of Science for generations offered qualified students throughout New York

City a prestigious alternative to the local high school for those wishing to major in the sciences, mathematics or science-related fields. Denver's Opportunity School was developed nearly half a century ago to provide alternative education for adolescents turned off by traditional schooling. Most cities in the early decades of this century established specialized vocational schools which were open on a citywide basis, and many also established schools offering superior academic programs, which were open to students from all parts of the city.

In recent years, many new forms of alternative high schools have been established. Among the promising alternatives observed during our site visits were the four Career Centers of the Columbus Vocational Planning District, the Far West High School and the Regional Occupations Centers in Oakland, the Alternative Programs in Atlanta, the Skills Centers and the Pre-Employment Preparation Program in Toledo, the six Magnet High Schools and the Skyline Career Development Center in Dallas, and the Milwaukee Specialty Programs attached to senior high schools.

Contemporary concepts of career education are embodied in a large number of the new types of schools. One characteristic common to these programs is the emphasis on action-learning or involvement in firsthand experiences in places of employment, the performing arts, or other situations in which special skills can be developed along with a deepened sense of responsibility for the effects of one's behaviors on others and on the achievement of goals. Another common characteristic of these programs is that students get firsthand acquaintance with the values and behaviors which operate in different occupations. These cooperative programs involve business, industrial, and a wide range of other community organizations, including the health professions, social services, and

the arts. Community advisory committees are playing a crucial role in the planning, development, and continual modification and updating of the career programs. Some members of these committees are spending many hours each week working out details of curriculum and instruction, identifying business and community agencies for career-related experiences, and assisting in provisions for placement.

The Far West High School in Oakland offers programs of learning activities at a variety of community resource sites. The experiences are designed to blend progress in academic subjects, career awareness, and basic and social skills. Another set of alternatives is offered through the Regional Occupations Centers which serve Oakland and neighboring districts. These centers were developed under California legislation that made it possible for multiple districts to enter into agreement for the establishment of career training programs supported in part by supplemental regional taxation. The programs range from banking occupations and auto insurance to color photography and respiratory therapy.

The Renaissance High School in Detroit, now in its second year, is devoted to academic excellence. Admission depends on evidence of high cognitive ability; and the standards for achievement are set well above those in most secondary schools. The 400 ninth and tenth grade students, who are presently enrolled, show evidence of great ability and outstanding performance in the arts and sciences. A new class of 200 will be admitted each year so that the enrollment in grades nine to twelve will reach 800. Graduates of the Renaissance School are likely to find little difficulty in gaining admission to even the most highly selective colleges.

Observers of alternative schools report unusually high student motivation and zest for learning; and many students in these schools testify that they are working harder than ever before and learning more. While some of the high morale may be accounted for by a novelty or "Hawthorne" effect, there is reason to believe that changes in student attitudes may be produced by such factors as the following:

- Since enrollment in a particular school reflects choices of the students and/or the parents, there is an added challenge to "make good."
- The increased opportunity for action-learning or hands-on experiences has strong appeal to students who are turned off by excessive emphasis on verbal learning or the performance of tasks which students often regard as boring.
- Greater opportunity for self-directed activities and greater freedom of movement tend to make students feel and behave more responsibly.
- The ways in which staffs are selected and the involvement of staff and students in school planning engenders high commitment to the purposes and philosophy of alternative schools.
- In alternative schools, especially at the higher levels, students are able to perceive a direct relationship between school experiences and their career and life aspirations.
- In many alternative and magnet schools, interactions with students of other races and cultures take on added meaning because of the variety of activities provided.

Despite the glowing success achieved by many of the alternative schools and magnet schools, they are still on trial. In order to justify themselves in the long run, they must provide education of undoubted excellence for the students they serve; and this excellence must not be

achieved at the expense of the quality of education provided in other schools. Ideally, the alternative schools should develop and test new approaches to learning which can then be adapted to other schools. Much more attention needs to be given, therefore, to increase communication and joint planning between the alternative schools and other schools in the system. All school personnel must be helped to perceive alternative schools as valuable resources which will enhance, rather than diminish, the effectiveness of other schools. This will not be easy to do if the alternative schools are perceived as enjoying privileges and resources not available to other schools.

There are a number of alternative schools which, like the earlier Denver Opportunity School, are designed for those "turned off" by traditional schooling. One of these is the Madison School which serves 300 secondary school dropouts in Norfolk, Virginia, by making adjustments for their career goals, present stage of development, and preferred learning styles. The Pre-Employment Preparation Program (PEP) in Toledo is another rescue mission for those who have enjoyed little previous sense of achievement in school. It accepts dropouts and delinquents either by referral from the schools or applications from students and parents. Through a variety of ingeniously contrived experiences, most students develop to a point where they may be recommended for full-time employment, placed in internships or on-the-job training, given additional training opportunities, or returned to their home schools. Adolescents who have been turned off by school and/or life pose one of the most difficult current educational challenges. The success of Madison, PEP, and similar programs depends heavily on leadership and staff of unusually high commitment, competence, energy,

ingenuity, and patience; continuing support from the board of education and central administration; and active involvement and support of business and community leaders and agencies.

Throughout the country there is renewed emphasis on mathematics, reading, and other language arts. Reading centers and clinics, continuous progress programs, and mastery learning procedures are only a few of the approaches to improved performance in the basic skills. In 1976 the Chicago Public Schools began to develop a mastery learning reading program based on the theories and research of Professor Benjamin S. Bloom of the University of Chicago. This program is being introduced into 500 schools and the plan is to extend it to all students from kindergarten up. The major components are formal specification of a comprehensive set of cognitive objectives; instruction beamed toward the objectives through specially prepared materials; frequent use of formative/diagnostic evaluation; corrective instructional treatments; and criterion-referenced testing to determine mastery in each instructional unit. Evaluation provides evidence of outstanding gains by inner-city pupils on both standardized and criterion-referenced tests. The enthusiasm for the program appears unusually high among teachers, coordinators, and central office administrators.

Another promising approach to increased achievement in the basic skills is represented by the installation of instructional management systems. Among those which seem to be producing appreciable effects are the procedures developed in Philadelphia by the Behavior Analysis Resource Center, which uses teacher/student contracting and a motivational system based on token reinforcement. Another is the Detroit Objective Referenced Tests (DORT), mandated by the court as a part of the Desegregation

Order. This system coordinates reading for nearly 300 desegregated schools. Grade objectives are specified and tests are used to measure the extent to which the objectives are realized. Cincinnati also has a carefully worked-out instructional management system known as CIMS.

All cities are now required to maintain special education programs for the handicapped; and our on-site studies have identified well designed and implemented programs in many cities. Among these are three recently observed in Columbus: a program for children who exhibit moderate to severe autistic-like behaviors and communication disorders; a Total Communications Program for the hearing-impaired, offered by nine units in four elementary and five secondary school buildings; and a special Work-Study Program which offers on-the-job training to prepare handicapped youth for vocations and constructive citizenship. The strengths of these programs are largely due to the careful selection of staff, the excellent facilities, and the strong state and local support which include active assistance from Ohio State University and the Columbus School for the Deaf.

Most cities today are offering optional programs in the creative and performing arts for students with strong interests and aptitudes or aspirations toward careers in the arts. New programs in drama and other performing arts were observed in many of the cities visited; and the Creative Arts Elementary School in Milwaukee has already been described. Two music programs, developed in the Dunbar Community Learning Center in Dallas, have achieved unusual success over a period of several years. One of these is Success Through Strings and is based on the Suzuki Violin method; the companion program is Learning Through Piano. The success of these programs has led to invitations to perform at the Music Education National Conference for two successive years. Over the

past five years the academic achievement of the students in these programs has increased dramatically.

A different approach to the arts is represented by the Performing Arts for Curricular use in Indianapolis. The program has three purposes: to strengthen and expand instruction in all of the arts; to plan and carry out arts experiences that reinforce basic curriculum; and to use the arts resources of the community more effectively. Among the various aspects of the project are an artist/intern program; a demonstration site for the State Arts in Education Plan; and program development for using Young Audiences ensembles in implementing curricular goals. The interns work with the Indianapolis Symphony, Ballet Theatre, Opera Company, and other groups to design programs directly related to the school curriculum. The Arts in Education program, which is one of six in the State program, is concerned with developing the ways in which the arts contribute to the total education experience of each child and using the sensory/perceptual approach to cognitive learning.

The Dallas Independent School District gave creative experiences in expressive and performing arts a high priority in establishing magnet high schools in the inner city, with the dual purpose of promoting racial/ethnic integration and high quality education. A distinguished theater director and scholar was persuaded to become director of the Arts Magnet High School, located in the old Booker T. Washington High School. This Arts Magnet, now in its second year of operation, enrolls some 700 students, of whom 50.4 percent are black, 41.5 percent white, 6.6 percent Mexican American, and 1.6 percent other. Both resident and visiting artists serve as members of the staff. The full-time staff includes thirty-three in the four clusters of dance, drama, music,

and visual arts; and seventeen in academic subjects. In addition, forty-five professionals in the arts give part-time instruction.

Recapitulation

The history of American education is marked by a movement toward greater inclusiveness. One of the major purposes of most of the new institutions of the past was the extension of educational opportunities to persons not being reached adequately by existing institutions. This was true of the comprehensive high school, the land-grant colleges, and the community colleges. In the past the reaching out to encompass new groups sometimes took such questionable forms as social or automatic promotion, proliferation of electives in secondary education, the abolition of examinations, reduction or elimination of essay writing, and—some would say—the elimination of all standards. These efforts to democratize education did not, however, divorce it from its basic elitism—an elitism which was built into the sorting and grading functions of the schools, and which stems from the necessity of providing a clerical class (in both senses of that term), and the continuing demand for the production of those with managerial and technical capabilities. Past efforts to reform the curriculum, while sometimes directed toward child and adolescent development, have been more or less tinged with concepts of a race to be run, the rewards chiefly to the swift and able; or of a set body of knowledge to be acquired.

The present reform movement in important respects is more fundamental than any of its predecessors. It seeks changes not merely in the content of the curriculum, the methodology of instruction, the organization of schools, and the grouping of students; but also in basic attitudes

toward the learner and in concepts regarding the functions of schools. The challenge to match educational experiences and opportunities to the demands of our society and the needs of children and youth is formidable. To meet it will require much closer collaboration than yet achieved between schools and other community agencies. What has been done is only earnest of things to come.

We are a long way from the education needed in our culturally diverse, highly technological, and environmentally threatened cities; but we may be closer than at any time in our history to an education which will develop the full potential of all our people. I predict that the next great advance in education will take shape from the trauma in our cities. We must continue our endeavors to identify needs and reach out to meet them.

Cities cannot renew themselves without high quality education which is responsive to the capabilities and needs of their diverse peoples. And, education of the required depth, breadth, and life-long power cannot be achieved without creation of citywide environments conducive to learning. Homes, places of work, cultural, social, recreational, and spiritual activities all represent incentives and opportunities to learn. Realization of the enormous untapped potential of our urban populations requires the combined efforts of government, business, churches, and community groups of all kinds. Education is an adventure to be pursued throughout life—in homes, through nature, and through every encounter with persons in one's own and other cultures. At no stage should it be confined to the schools; but schools have an inescapable obligation to stimulate learning in all life situations by developing the skills and the habits of observation and inquiry.

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